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Near East & South Asia

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EGYPT

Curbing Terrorists' Democratic Freedoms Advised

91AA0100A Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
4 Nov 90 p 5

[Article by 'Ali al-Dali: "Egyptian Reflections: the Mufti of Egyptian Terrorism in Baghdad"]

[Excerpts] I wrote an article which appeared on this page two or more months ago. The article, entitled "Tasni' Khomeyni Misri" [Manufacturing an Egyptian Khomeyni], warned about rising terrorism and terrorist methods which were being developed. I wrote the article after learning that the mufti of al-Fayyum and the highest ranking leader of radical Islamic groups is the one who has been giving orders to the young enforcers of death and destruction: the young, bearded men who have been brainwashed and who have been given a terrifying picture of the Islamic religion. This was done so that these young men can be driven or set in motion to destroy the country or engulf it in bloodshed. I warned against the mufti of al-Fayyum whose news appears in newspapers as though he were one of the nation's statesmen or one of the people's leaders, but the fact of the matter is that the mufti of al-Fayyum is a bloodthirsty radical who has neither knowledge nor understanding in his head. There is nothing in that man's head but his intentions to shed people's blood so he can get to power.

I said it a hundred times: I warned people against the merchants of religion who are working on an imported scheme financed by people who are conspiring against democratic Egypt, the stronghold of peace in the area. These people are also scheming to destroy Egypt and Egyptians to prevent Egypt, with its human and scientific resources, from becoming a great state, a state that everyone in the area would look up to and that Arabs can be proud of because of its power, vitality, and industry, and because of its arts and sciences. Egypt then is being targeted. As I said before repeatedly, the major conspiracy to strike a blow against Egypt and prevent it from building its civilization depends on the merchants of religion. There is no difference between 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, the highest ranking religious leader, and Hamid Abu-al-Nasr, the grand master of the Muslim Brotherhood. All these people are fighting on the same side: they are trying to destroy Egypt and shed the blood of those who disagree with them. To them, having an opinion signifies listening and obeying and turning Egypt into one funereal gathering.

Is it not amazing, disgusting, and despicable that news is received from Baghdad about a meeting that took place between 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, the blind shaykh or the prince of terror, and Saddam Husayn, the enemy of the human race, the killer of hope, and the grave digger of the area?

Why would 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, the leader of radical groups in Egypt, meet with Saddam Husayn when his

slogan, like that of the Muslim Brothers, is Islam is the solution? What does Saddam Husayn have to do with Islam or with any religion?

'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman met with the Iraqi scoundrel, the man who devises schemes with his henchmen, with Yasir 'Arafat and his gangs, and with 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and his groups to kill Egyptians and to destroy our dear, beloved country. This meeting took place on the day Dr. Rif'at al-Mahjub was killed by 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman's boys. That fact means that the conspiracy is now crystal clear: all the merchants of religion in Egypt—the Muslim Brothers, the Jihad, and the remaining small gangs of bloodthirsty, radical groups—are now the enemies of the Egyptian people. They are mercenaries who are selling the country for Iraqi dinars or for any dinar or other foreign currency. Those mercenaries and killers who are merchants of religion carry bombs, machine guns, and wireless radios. They want to bring the Egyptian awakening to a standstill, and they want to bury scientists, thinkers, and artists in one grave in the name of the Koran or in the name of the devil. Opposition to these people must change. They are not to be considered citizens with the same rights other citizens have because giving them the same treatment that honorable people receive is an injustice to Egyptian patriotism which is protected by the people and guarded by the security men who are being felled in front of our eyes by bullets fired by traitors and mercenaries, the agents of Saddam Husayn.

The support which Muslim Brothers and the Fascist Labor Party are giving to their ally, Saddam Husayn, and his scheme in the area has one unequivocal meaning now. It has specific objectives, foremost among which is the destruction of Egypt.

How are we going to deal with this problem, and how do we confront terrorism?

How do we confront the mercenaries, traitors, and agents now that the highest ranking leader of Islamic groups in Egypt has visited Baghdad and his meeting with Saddam Husayn has been revealed? How do we confront those mercenaries, traitors, and agents now that the Muslim Brothers have declared their support for Saddam Husayn and for his schemes to plunder the Arabs and shed their blood? What are we going to do now about this problem, [I ask], or how are we going to confront terrorism now?

Do we confront conspiracy or high treason by invoking the law and throwing the book at conspirators or traitors, or do we resort to the ABC's of democracy and freedom of opinion? Do we bring all the great, noble implications of freedom of opinion to bear on this matter?

Radical Islamic groups do not believe in opinions. To them opinions are chains, swords, and guns. All merchants of religion in Egypt, starting with investment companies and ultimately including the princes of terror in Upper and Lower Egypt, hide behind the cloak of the Muslim Brothers. Muslim Brothers and bloodthirsty

Islamic groups in Egypt do work together, and the Muslim Brothers' newspapers, AL-SHA'B, as well as other magazines and publications, defend 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman enthusiastically and passionately. They defend all Islamic groups and all Islamic leaders. Not only are the Muslim Brothers involved in the Islamic groups' scheme, they are in fact the authors of that scheme.

I am a proponent of democracy, not one of its adversaries. I would almost say that death is better than life under a despotic ruler and dictator. However, just as democracy is the normal course for a civilized life, freedom of opinion is a God-given right that no human being has the right to deprive another human being of, unless he is the enemy of God and the human race. I would say that democracy is a way of life. When the dawn of democracy broke after the October War, it brought radiance into our lives after the cloud of prounity socialism and its misery were removed from our lives and after the dictator's aides and the advocates of Fascism fell. And yet, what I would say now is that the enemies of democracy and its executioners may have benefited from this democratic climate in Egypt. They may have benefited from the rule of law, and they may have used the law to organize their ranks, spread their aides, and devise plans to destroy the state. Yes, indeed, democracy gave the groups that engage in terrorism in the name of religion the legitimacy with which they could act, speak, and recruit young people. They can even assemble in mosques for the purpose of praying when they are actually using the mosques of God as quarters from which terrorism and efforts to destroy democracy can be unleashed.

Terrorist activity carried out in the name of religion has grown under democracy. Savage crimes committed by these terrorists have become numerous. These terrorists went so far as to assassinate the hero of war and peace, President al-Sadat. They assassinated more than 120 police soldiers and officers, and then they tried to assassinate many prominent Egyptians. Recently, they succeeded in assassinating Dr. Rif'at al-Mahjub, who is considered the number two man in the country.

Officials discover bombs, machine guns, chains, and all kinds of weapons in all the hiding places utilized by the bearded terrorists who carry copies of the Koran and quote Koranic verses. Now these terrorists have an actual, public presence in all the governorates, especially those of Upper Egypt, and the governorates of Cairo and al-Jizah. Their presence in those governorates is noticeable. When police raided their hiding places looking for al-Mahjub's killers, they found that these hiding places were located in al-Duqqi, in al-Jizah, in central Cairo, and in Cairo suburbs. These terrorist groups have taken advantage of the fact that democracy legitimized their existence and their activities. They are able to conduct their activities in public and to spread their poison among young people. Their diabolical plan was such that they turned their attention to recruiting children. In a good newspaper report published in AL-MUSAWWAR

Magazine, Najwan 'Abd-al-Latif, a journalist and editor, said this: "As I traveled in the city of Bani Suwayf I heard that children were throwing fire bombs at Christians' cars and destroying some of their property. The children who were doing those things were very young children. Who would put such ideas into their heads?" [passage omitted]

Because of democracy, then, security officers are not able to contain those Islamic terrorist groups. In other words, terrorism could destroy Egypt some day if this terrorist religious activity continues to grow in Egypt's governorates and to take advantage of this democracy. Egypt's democracy is protecting terrorism and giving it the freedom to ruin society and ignite the fires of civil strife. [passage omitted]

Was the statement made by the director of security in Bani Suwayf true, and was a taste of democracy behind the rising wave of terrorist activities carried out in the name of religion? Is democracy responsible for the emergence of the Muslim Brothers' intense, public activity? Is it responsible for the emergence of these groups which legally do not exist? If the free climate of democracy has produced this frightening danger in a society that is building itself and striving to find its place in the sun, will democracy, because of its natural tolerance, become responsible for bringing about darkness and injustice?

Terrorists, using religion as a ruse, will take action to destroy Egypt after they gain strength. They will recruit school children who will be brainwashed and eventually grow up and turn into time bombs that will explode in the country. When that happens, darkness and injustice will follow. What are we going to do about that then?

Ultimately, democracy is innocent; it is not guilty of any harm. A democratic society can protect democracy and its own stability by enacting new laws to combat terrorism. These new laws would ban any political activity in the name of religion and prohibit any gathering in the name of the Koran. Egypt is an Islamic country, and its constitution states that the Koran is a principal source of legislation. Therefore, any political activity carried out in the name of religion on Egyptian soil would be nothing but an imported criminal scheme to turn Egypt into a country of darkness and injustice. It has been established by newspapers and eyewitnesses that these groups which buy and sell religion permit theft, murder, and arson of property which belongs to non-Muslims. They permit attacks at any time on any Muslim Egyptian citizen, and they permit the killing of that citizen because [they consider him] a non-believer.

When will democracy wake up?

Uranium Finds Expected to Increase Energy Sufficiency

91AA0092A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
14 Nov 90 p 10

[Text] The Egyptian Government has completed preparation of a plan for producing nuclear fuel from local raw materials to cover part of the needs of the national program for nuclear stations, which are estimated at about 10,000 tons of uranium during the next 10 years. That is the amount expected to be consumed by eight nuclear plants for generating electricity, each with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts, covering 40 percent of the electricity needed in Egypt until the year 2,000. The plan included a list of uranium sources in Egypt, and an estimate of the amount of it expected to be produced. Researchers from the nuclear energy agency, the agency for nuclear plants, and the academy for scientific research participated in the studies, which determined that the most important sources of uranium in Egypt are found in granite, sedimentary, and phosphate rock, and black sand.

The studies revealed the presence of uranium in granite rock in the eastern desert (east of the Nile River) in the granite belt between Qina and Safaja, extending to Qift and al-Qusayr in southern Egypt. This granite is known as "pink granite."

Research operations in 1970 had discovered the presence of uranium also in the Wadi 'Atallah region, and the presence of minerals secondary to uranium in the al-Masika and al-'Aridiyah regions which have become the most important regions for uranium reserves in Egypt. Therefore the agency for nuclear materials is now digging wells in these two regions to depths varying from 80 to 100 meters within the previously excavated mine tunnels to discover what the uranium concentrations in these regions are.

Uranium minerals also appear in pink granite rocks northwest of the city of al-Ghurdaqah on the Red Sea coast and the eastern desert. Studies are still going on in the eastern Sinai peninsula and the Bahariyah oasis to discover any additional amount of the minerals that contain the element uranium or other radioactive elements.

The studies which were carried out for this purpose revealed that phosphate is considered a source of uranium, which is produced as a byproduct during the process of manufacturing phosphate fertilizers. Thus uranium can be extracted during the process of manufacturing phosphoric acid from raw phosphate, where the amount of uranium in this raw material is up to 100 parts per million.

The importance of phosphate as a source of uranium increases in view of the fact that in Egypt five companies are working to mine the raw material. They are: the Red Sea Phosphate Company; al-Nasr Phosphate Company; the Egyptian Financial and Industrial Company; Egypt

Phosphate Company; and the Abu Za'bal Company for Fertilizers and Chemicals. Moreover, three companies are working in manufacturing phosphate fertilizers, namely the plants of Kafr al-Zayyat, Asyut, and Abu Za'bal.

The Abu Za'bal Company for Fertilizers and Chemicals serves as an open door for the agency for nuclear material with regard to extracting uranium whenever it is needed, because it is the only plant which is manufacturing phosphoric acid as an intermediary in the manufacture of triple superphosphate. The productive capacity of the Abu Za'bal plant is up to 70,000 tons of raw phosphate a year, and the company plans to double this production by 1992, thus doubling the uranium existing in it.

The studies estimate the amount of uranium derived from the manufacture of phosphate fertilizers under present circumstances to be about 15 tons a year. When the plants production is doubled, production is expected to reach 30 tons a year. The agency for nuclear materials—the one agency responsible for providing nuclear fuel—will oversee the installation and operation of a uranium production line in the Abu Za'bal plant for treating the plant's entire production of phosphoric acid to provide some nuclear fuel. It will also help to protect the environment from pollution from radioactive materials which remain in the phosphate or phosphoric acid and phosphate fertilizers.

On the other hand, a scientific study done by the international Oberstone [Ubirstun] company confirmed that it would be possible to economically exploit the black sands present on the northern coast to produce the minerals zircon, monazite, and rutile, minerals of interest to nuclear industries, and from which uranium can be extracted. The study, which the company did for the agency for nuclear materials, estimated the cost of the project at about \$24 million.

The study implies the existence of confirmed reserves of the black sands sufficient to operate the plant for 10 years, which is the hypothetical age of the plant's machinery, and that the amount of this sand is 80 million cubic meters, containing 2 percent zircon, and 12 percent rutile. The project, which will start operations soon, intends to market these rare minerals commercially, in addition to obtaining uranium for local consumption.

Thus the plant can be operated economically, and the value of the production will cover the necessary costs of building and operation.

The black sands also contain other economic minerals, most importantly gold, cassiterite, magnetite, garnet, and almandite. In specific regions, the black sands contain up to 30 percent of these minerals, besides the rutile, zircon, and monazite, whereas the general percentage is

5 percent in the regions slated for commercial exploitation. Black sand reserves are considered to be unlimited, if underwater sands and sands in the sand dunes are taken into consideration.

Uranium is found in monazite at about 0.46 percent, and Egyptian monazite itself does not exceed 3 percent of the economic minerals in the black sands. Assuming that the plant treats a million tons of black sand containing 5 percent economic minerals, it would produce about 1,500 tons of monazite, containing seven tons of uranium.

Government Advised on Stimulating Stock Market

91AA0092B Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-IQTISADI in Arabic
29 Oct 90 p 19

[Article by Khalid Fu'ad Sharif]

[Text]It is evident that economic reform in Egypt takes various and varying forms year after year depending on the latest fashion, because embarking on some means of reform varies from one season to the next according to the whims of the officials. For example, we see that allotment is considered the most modern fashion today, even though it is also headed towards oblivion bit by bit. Before, the prevailing fashion was developing the stock market. At the end of the seventies the economic parlors in Egypt were full of talk about developing the stock market and what could be achieved for our economy. The government spent more than \$1 million at the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties to prepare three principal studies on developing the stock market in Egypt, two of which were funded by various international agencies. At the conclusion of these studies, a number of proposals were made to the Egyptian government on how to expand commercial activity in the Cairo stock exchange.

But today, talk about developing the stock market has become something only a few whisper about. Moreover, the government has failed to link the efforts that are made in the field of allotment in the governorates, tourism, and the corporations to expansion in the activities of the stock exchange. On the contrary, the government is selling assets in auctions without widely submitting the sale of these assets to the public to any degree worth mentioning. Likewise, the government has ignored the possibility of linking increased rights of the shareholders in public sector companies to the development of the stock market. In addition to that, the system whereby workers would share in the capital, which was widely discussed and which the government commended, has faded into the shadows.

Why do we see the issue of stimulating the stock market no longer holding the interest it must have today? Is it because the stock market agency, which was established to serve this purpose, failed to achieve its goals? A quick glance at the level of trade in the Cairo stock exchange—especially government bonds—shows that the volume of trade is constantly increasing year after year, increasing

from 45.9 million pounds in 1983/84 to 175.9 million in 1986/87. Today, the volume of transactions has grown to more than 200 million pounds, which represents less than 0.5 percent of the gross domestic product. Indeed, the volume of transactions is less than 0.5 percent of the gross domestic product, that after eight whole years of government attempts to stimulate the stock market in Egypt.

Our failure to reinvigorate the stock market is seen as a reflection of the government's inability to draw off local savings on a broad scale. We see that this failure had appeared to a large extent in the people's turning to what are called Islamic investment companies. Because the interest rate in the Central Bank is a lot less than the annual rate of inflation, and because of lack of opportunity to buy shares in investment companies through the stock market, those who want to make a high and quick profit have easily fallen prey to the Islamic investment companies. For the record, only about 25 companies submit their shares for buying and selling in the Cairo stock exchange, despite the fact that hundreds of companies are registered in it!

Moreover, there is no logical justification for the government not to link the current attempts at allotment to stimulating and expanding the stock market. Is there not much that we can learn from Britain in this field? Britain achieved a large volume of trading stocks in the stock exchange by way of selling a single public sector company, British Telecom. Perhaps the revival and stimulation of the stock market in an advanced country like Britain was easier than it would be in Egypt, but we see other developing countries, such as Jamaica, that have achieved their goals in stimulating the stock market and linking it to allotment, so we can learn a lot from studying the experiences of these countries.

On the other hand, we see that nothing has been done regarding linking wages to productivity as well. Isn't the project to give workers capital the best way to achieve this goal? When one owns shares in the company in which one works, one bears the losses of this company when it loses, whereas one profits when the company profits, so why then do we continue to give raises and rewards regardless of the financial situation of the company when it is obvious that giving the workers shares in the company in which they work is guaranteed to raise their productivity and to link it to their profits and losses? Isn't this way guaranteed to link productivity to wages and at the same time stimulate the stock market?

Even though the stock market agency has tried to confront the negative effects of the failure of the money investment companies, it must increase its efforts directed at stimulating the stock market if it wants to achieve tangible results in this area. In my opinion, most allotment projects must be achieved through the stock market, with the goal of stimulating it and expanding the base of selling shares to include the largest possible number of people. Perhaps the time has come for the government to run advertising campaigns such as those

run by Britain and Jamaica to point to the numerous advantages to buying shares in the stock exchange. It is certain that our inability to stimulate the stock market is a reflection of our failure to draw on the public's savings. As long as we continue to fail in this, economic stagnation will continue to be a major feature of our current economy.

ISRAEL

Galilee Arabs Threaten Violence

91AE0248B Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
31 Dec 90 p 3

[Text] Residents of Arab localities in the Galilee warn that another violent Land Day may take place if the government goes ahead with its intention to seize 7,000 dunam of land in the Galilee area for housing for new immigrants.

The reference was to land expropriated in 1976 for public projects, but the government did not implement its right to use it and some of the land returned to the owners. Now the government intends once again to appropriate that land. We recall that in 1976 Land Day broke out when the government announced the land appropriation. Six people were killed and dozens were wounded in the demonstrations organized on that occasion.

Fadl Na'amana, head of the Arab Land Defense Committee, yesterday warned about an intifadah among Israeli Arabs. "Our reaction must be much sharper than it was on the first Land Day," he said. "We are fighting for our physical existence and we must not give up or remain indifferent."

A stone roadblock was erected yesterday at the entrance of the locality Asha. Western Galilee. Travelers on their way to Ashar discovered the roadblock and alerted the police. Misgav police opened an investigation.

Dr. Alex Blei, the prime minister's adviser for Arab affairs, said in reaction to the news that he had no doubt that the heads of Arab local authorities do not view the situation as all that serious. "There is no question of appropriating land, but of striking roots on land seized many years ago from Arabs and Jews," he said.

Settlement, Leadership Plans in Kakh Discussed

91P40117A Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 9 Jan 91 p 8

[Interview with Kakh functionary Tiran Pollak by Hanan Schlein, correspondent for MA'ARIV; first three opening paragraphs are introduction; date, place not given]

[Text] What is happening today in the movement, almost two months after the killing of Rabbi Kahane? Immediately after the murder, after we had recovered from the shock, we continued activities according to the

spirit of the words as outlined by Rabbi Kahane. We have also been careful to tow the line taken by the rabbi whose principle was to awaken the people and to make them aware that they can determine their own destiny, particularly within a democratic country.

Since the murder, activists in the Kakh movement have been arranging dozens of memorial services for the rabbi in which the rabbi's son, Benny, has taken part. In many synagogues throughout the country, we established similar branches of the movement and classes in the teachings of Rabbi Kahane.

As is necessary, some of the worshippers are posting leaflets of the movement, and we are setting up home study groups with the participation of the rabbi's son and students from the Zionist Concept Yeshiva, founded by the rabbi.

[Hanan Schlein] What is the status of Rabbi Meir Kahane's son in the movement?

[Tiran Pollak] It is quite possible that he will head the movement. He is an active participant in many of the events we are arranging. He is a wise pupil and, should he become head of the movement, it is reasonable that he will take two or three close aides with him to lead the movement.

[Schlein] Are there other candidates to lead the movement?

[Pollak] In the past there were several names, though it is still unclear how the future leadership of the movement will appear, if one man or the leadership group is to be elected. In addition to Binyamin Kahane, the name of Yequiti'el Ben-Ya'akov comes up from the Kfar Tapuh settlement. He was very close to Rabbi Kahane. If the leadership is elected, it is reasonable that there will be members who are core, veteran, activists in the movement, such as the rabbi's son, Yequiti'el Ben-Ya'akov, David Ben-David, Barukh Marzel, and others.

[Schlein] And what about you?

[Pollak] I prefer to remain outside this area as someone who is not told how to act but, rather, as someone who works independently as he did before. I do not want to be the commander.

[Schlein] What about plans for the future?

[Pollak] We will continue to go to the people and explain to them that the ball is in their court, as we have done previously. In our view, the coming struggle with the establishment and the authorities will be over Judea and Samaria, and most of them are religious with a deep connection to the land. Kakh activists intend to concentrate on a number of settlements in Judea and Samaria in order to use a stop sign [as published].

[Schlein] Do you mean settlements such as Kfar Tapuh?

[Pollak] There is an explicit intention to thicken the settlement and to turn it into our stronghold in Samaria, similar to the stronghold we have already established in Qiryat Arba', from which much light has already gone out to the people of Israel.

Four Proposals To Facilitate Immigrant Absorption

91AE0208B Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
21 Dec 90 p 3C

[Article by Professor Leo Liderman]

[Text] There is widespread agreement among economists that the current economic policy is inadequate to handle the absorption of 200,000 immigrants this year and about 400,000 immigrants in the coming year in a way that will prevent a large crisis in the areas of housing, employment, and the balance of payments. Moreover, there is a growing fear that the immigration wave will cease due to the economy's difficulties in absorbing the immigrants that have arrived to date.

It is still not too late to change the policy's direction.

I wish here to discuss four concrete proposals, which, in my humble opinion, can bring about the more rapid and efficient absorption of immigrants.

A Comprehensive Socioeconomic Pact Is Needed

The recent months have demonstrated the extent to which the government's unilateral making of economic policy is unacceptable under the conditions of the Israeli economy. We have recently seen a wave of strikes and industrial unrest that is not in keeping with the historical arrival of hundreds of thousands of immigrants in Israel.

Even Absorption Ministry employees have deemed it correct to strike under the existing circumstances.

Industrialists and investors perceive the government's policy as lacking credibility, as evidenced by the fact that they have taken very little advantage of the government's programs for the provision of guarantees. Without a change in policy, these trends will continue, and they will damage the absorption process. We have seen how difficult it is for the government's programs to win passage in the finance committee and in the Knesset.

Therefore, a development similar to the 1985 stabilization plan is needed: a comprehensive socioeconomic pact between the government, the Histadrut [labor federation], and employers. Such a pact would explicitly define each sector's share in the immigration absorption process.

The Histadrut's main contribution in the framework of the above-mentioned agreement would be to make certain concessions regarding wages for the sake of increasing employment in the economy, inasmuch as it is clear that the higher real wages are, the less inclined employers are to increase employment. The Histadrut

should also contribute by cooperating in introducing flexibility to the labor market and to existing wage agreements, including the cost-of-living increment agreement. Further, the Histadrut should promise to preserve industrial quiet while the above-mentioned pact is being implemented.

The government's contribution to the arrangement would be to explain the rules of behavior of price-controlled commodities and the exchange rate against the background of an agreement on the method of financing immigration absorption expenditures.

The government must outline a clear policy on the training and retraining of immigrants for professions that are compatible with their efficient, rapid employment absorption. From the standpoint of industrialists, it is important that the government determine a policy that encourages investments, growth, and industrial exports, while reducing marginal production costs. An increase in public investments in the infrastructure is an important step in this direction.

In the envisaged agreement, industrialists and employers would be expected to define clear plans for absorbing immigrants by exploiting the Israeli economy's relative advantages, as well as plans for renewing growth and investments. In certain areas, the advance determination of a price fixing policy would be desirable.

The Encouragement of Long-Term Savings

In this period, when the mobilization of capital from abroad is problematic and it is necessary to turn to domestic capital sources, policy measures having the exact, opposite effect are imminent. Such measures include the taxation of real profits from financial investments, which is supposed to further standardize the treatment of different savings instruments. An analysis of the recommended measures shows that they would damage the main source of long-term savings in Israel, pension funds. The draft law imposes a tax on the proceeds of these savings and is an incentive to reduce deposits in pension funds and to shift to short-term investments (such as trust funds) or to increase consumption (mainly of durable goods).

In the light of the substantial financing needs weighing on the economy, it is desirable to reconsider the draft law and, moreover, to propose measures having the opposite effect of encouraging savings in the Israeli economy. Savings will release sources for investment in the different branches of the economy and housing. [Fiscal] standardization and the elimination of distortions in the existing tax systems are important objectives in themselves. However, it is possible to defer treatment of this matter and return to the goal of encouraging long-term savings, which has been a goal of every previous Israeli government.

In my opinion, it is important for the government to contribute its share in the area of the budget by increasing national savings. An internal pact between the

different ministries is also desirable. Such a pact would specify how each ministry can contribute more revenues to the treasury and reduce expenditures. Having governmental companies issue stock is an important step in this connection.

Retraining the Human Capital of the Immigrants

About 60 percent of the immigrants arriving from the Soviet Union are scientific and academic professionals and members of other liberal professions. The immigration wave thus represents great human capital that Israel is receiving at no cost.

To exploit this human capital efficiently, it is necessary to complement the immigrants' education (including Hebrew language instruction) and retrain them for professions suited to the economy.

Following the great initial enthusiasm over human capital arriving in Israel, a real, even acute, need to complement the immigrants' education to suit our reality is needed. It is reasonable to assume that about half of the immigrants will change their professions after arriving in Israel. This will require programs, such as courses which facilitate career changes, to increase employment mobility.

Important activities are indeed being undertaken in this area. However, the fear is that too little too late is being done.

Introducing Efficiency to Administrative Systems

It is surprising how slowly administrative-bureaucratic frameworks change, even during a national emergency. Why, for example, are Absorption Ministry offices not open 24 hours a day to expedite the handling of absorption procedures? Why is emphasis regarding housing not being shifted to solutions based primarily on apartment rentals, inasmuch as it is clear that as long as the employment situation is unclear, the immigrants will tend not to purchase apartments or take advantage of the subsidized mortgages offered to them?

All planning and thinking regarding housing should thus be devoted to creating frameworks and incentives for the development of an apartment rental market. A related issue is the extremely slow pace of land allocation and the need to introduce flexibility to the policy of the Israel Lands Administration.

It is not too late to bring the Histadrut, the employers, and the government to the discussions table to arrange the handling of the national project of immigration absorption.

Muslim Brotherhood Reportedly Co-Opting Schools

91AE0248A Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
28 Dec 90 p 1

[Text] The Muslim Brothers are opening kindergartens with PLO money and charging parents half of the fee required in private kindergartens; in many cases they also serve hot meals to the children. They are taking over schools, sports groups, and public libraries and stirring religious extremism among students 13 years of age and older.

These are a few of the data on the expanding activities of the movement featured in a position paper presented to the education minister by Dr. Dov Goldberger, director general of the Association of Culture and Sports Centers [MITNAS]. The position paper was written in the wake of a convention recently organized by Goldberger for scores of heads of Arab local authorities, MITNAS directors, and education officials.

Participants in the convention claimed that the Muslim Brothers' activities resemble those carried out by the El Hama'ayan network of SHAS [Sephardi Torah Guardians] in the Jewish sector. Jalal Abu-Ta'ma, until recently head of the Baqa al-Gharbiyya Council, said: "You are abandoning us to be swept away by the extremism of the Muslim Brothers."

The council head of Jisr az-Zarqa, 'Ayz al-Din 'Amash said that the Muslim Brothers are opening not only kindergartens, but also classes for basic education and tutoring for children and youths. "Our children, who until now were throwing stones on the Coastal Road because they had nothing else to do, now go to them to break the boredom."

Similar statements on expanded movement activities among the Arab educational system were also made by representatives of other Arab localities like Shefar'am, Sakhnin, and 'Ar'ara.

According to the Arab representatives, the Muslim Brothers are trying to get to parents through their children.

'Abd Awwad, a Tamra resident who is close to the Muslim Brothers, claimed that "the phenomenon of greater interest in religion," as he defined it, has greatly increased in the past two years among Arab youths because the Muslim Brothers provide an answer to the problems troubling them, such as the Palestinian problem and social problems. "They have no other option but Islam," Awwad said. "Every day I see in Tamra at least (another) 15 youths who used to take hard drugs and who stopped since they became religious. Today there is unemployment. Instead of sitting on fences and doing bad things, they go to the mosque and there the Muslim Brothers lecture them about how to live."

As for lower kindergarten fees charged by the Muslim Brothers, Awwad said that in Tamra there is only one such kindergarten (as opposed to over 20 private kindergartens). Parents pay 40 shekels per child there, compared to 80 shekels in a private kindergarten.

According to him, the movement is stronger in other villages, like Kafr Kanna. There the Brothers opened a private clinic where residents pay a symbolic fee for treatment. The movement allows Arab residents to borrow books from its libraries free of charge.

Awwad rejected the claim that the PLO is one of the financing sources of the movement and said that its resources come from a donations fund belonging to Israeli Arabs.

LEBANON

Deputy Subhi Yaghi on Future of Country

91AE0135A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
2 Nov 90 p 24

[Interview with Deputy Subhi Yaghi: "Ending the Rebellion Paves the Way to Reconciliation Government Being Set Up for Whole Country and To Militias Becoming Disbanded"; on 15 October; place not specified]

[Text] Deputy Subhi Yaghi is considered one of the permanent members of the Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies. He has served in that position since 1972. On 16 October Deputy Yaghi was also re-elected to serve as one of three authorized deputies for the Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies.

AL-HAWADITH interviewed the veteran member of the Chamber of Deputies, who served under several speakers of parliament, on the eve of his re-election. AL-HAWADITH asked him about a subject which has been placed on the Chamber of Deputies' front burner: that of amending the chamber's bylaws. Deputy Yaghi was asked about the relationship between amending those bylaws and unfolding events in Lebanon, and he was asked how important amending those bylaws was to legislative activity as a whole. The interview was conducted as follows:

[AL-HAWADITH] You have been serving on the staff of the Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies since 1972. What do staff members of that bureau do, and, historically speaking, why have you been a member of that staff?

[Yaghi] The Bureau of the Chamber of Deputies is tantamount to a collective leadership for parliament, overseeing parliament's business and guiding its functional and administrative affairs. I participated in staff activities as secretary or authorized deputy in accordance with the provisions of parliament's bylaws. The reasons why my involvement with the staff continued may be due to the deputies' confidence in me because the secretary and the authorized deputy, just like the speaker and his deputy, are elected by all the members of the

Chamber of Deputies. The spirit of solidarity and objectivity which I invoke in my dealings with successive speakers may also be a reason for my continued service in that capacity. After all, a Bureau staff member has a direct relationship with the speaker and with the deputies as well.

[AL-HAWADITH] Much has been said recently about the need to amend parliament's bylaws and the need for bureau staff to exercise better control over parliamentary matters. Do you think such matters are achievable?

[Yaghi] There is no doubt that in the wake of recent amendments to the constitution, amending parliament's bylaws has become a pressing matter. Now some articles in the bylaws contradict the provisions of the constitutional amendments. But meetings and parliamentary debates will have to be held to amend the bylaws which must be presented in a general session so that the outcome which is being hoped for can be achieved in light of the changes that past practices show are necessary. It ought to be noted here that in a superficial sense laws and bylaws are not the same because the bylaws go into effect as soon as they are approved by the parliamentary council. Consequently, the authority "to enact and promulgate," which is required to make laws effective, is not required to amend the bylaws.

[AL-HAWADITH] You say that the bylaws can be amended in light of the changes which some practices have shown are necessary. Do you mean that the bylaws will undergo a radical change?

[Yaghi] We are always seeking the best in what we do, and we cannot achieve that best unless we consider experience and the facts. Theory always clashed with what had to be done to implement it.

No matter how much is done to make the bylaws cover everything, the application of these bylaws, the evolution of parliamentary action, and the legislative mechanism make amending these bylaws inevitable and necessary. What I said may be construed as an attempt to meet such needs in the new bylaws.

[AL-HAWADITH] Parliament is slated to move to its main building in al-Nijmah Square. To what extent will amending the bylaws be affected by the location factor?

[Yaghi] The fact that the Chamber of Deputies has moved to the building in al-Nijmah Square means that all our efforts can now be devoted to bringing all parliamentary affairs under control. More effort in particular has to be devoted to those who perform the studies which are required today by the legislative machinery. Now that everyone in parliament, employees as well as deputies, is working at full capacity, more attention must also be given to keeping better records of documents, minutes of meetings, and references, and to regulating functional activities. After today, no one will have an excuse: no one will be able to say that security factors are keeping him from coming to parliament to do those tasks that he has to do.

[AL HAWADITH] It is known that you are one of the deputies "living outside their place of residence." Since you took part in the al-Ta'if Meeting, it is also being said that you are a "summerland deputy." This is being said because your home is in al-Hazimiyah. Have all conditions for your return to your home been met?

[Yaghi] Ending the rebellion that we wished the former commander of the army had not carried out has removed the factors and the causes that drove us away from our homes. Our separation from our homes has now been brought to an end, especially after the Lebanese army under its legitimate leaders took over security matters in the area there. For me and my colleagues, going home today or tomorrow makes no difference. Neither security nor politics is a factor in delaying or advancing our return. What will determine when we return is rather the completion of required repairs in our homes and making water and electricity connections to the area since some of the systems there have been damaged.

[AL-HAWADITH] Do you believe that ending the rebellion will be enough to resolve the difficult problem which the government was considering? I say this particularly because everything in the state had been brought to a standstill until the question of the general could be resolved.

[Yaghi] Bringing the question of General Aoun to an end was a major, grave problem. It was impeding the progress which we wanted the government to make to solve the crisis in Lebanon. The question of Aoun is unlike other questions because Gen. Aoun was part of the legitimate government. He was not an outside intruder. Dealing with such a problem required the use of extreme caution and patience because Aoun, who was part of the legitimate government, was a member of the military establishment on which we and the Lebanese have pinned many hopes. These may be the reasons why the government chose to move at a painfully slow pace despite urgent pleas to find a solution quickly. When further delays and more patience were no longer possible, "burning him out" became the remedy of last resort.

[AL-HAWADITH] Given the fact that the difficult problem of the rebellion has been brought to an end, what do you think are Lebanon's prospects in the near future?

[Yaghi] Restoring the unity of the military institution and that of comrades-in-arms, which is something they had always been intent on, has to be the starting point of a new effort to take more steps to bring about a political as well as a security solution to the crisis in Lebanon. Doing that has to have a positive effect on all other areas.

That is why I expect the government to take observers by surprise and to move quickly on this. Its first step would be a real national reconciliation government in which everyone will participate. Such a government will be the product of a "Greater Beirut" becoming a reality. The legitimate government would set out from there to

establish its full sovereignty over Lebanese territory in accordance with the provisions of the National Pact which was achieved in al-Ta'if. I expect this government will make the difficult decision which some of its members who are "ministers of state" have found difficult. The government's decision will require the militias, which have grown since 1975, to disband. The government will also codify the elements of the distinguished relations between Lebanon and Syria, and it will do so by invoking clear, unequivocal, and objective principles that serve the interests of both countries.

Arab Ba'th Party Official on Future of Country

91AE0135B London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
2 Nov 90 pp 25-26

[Interview with 'Abdallah al-Amin, regional secretary of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party in Lebanon: "'Abdallah al-Amin, Regional Secretary of the Arab Ba'th Party in Lebanon Says, 'Fall of Aoun Expedites End of Lebanese War'"; date and place of interview not specified]

[Text] AL-HAWADITH interviewed 'Abdallah al-Amin, regional secretary of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party in Lebanon, on the eve of the lightning like military operation which was carried out against General Aoun by the legitimate army of Lebanon led by General Emile Lahud, with support and backing from the Syrian army. Mr. al-Amin had assured us that this operation would be carried out, and he even told us what the zero hour was. That is why we had to interview him once again after rapid changes in the political geography of Lebanon were brought about by that operation. The text of the interview with 'Abdallah al-Amin follows:

[AL-HAWADITH] Now that the matter with Gen. Michel Aoun has been settled, what steps will be taken after the question of the rebellion is settled? What approach will be taken to end the crisis in Lebanon?

[Al-Amin] Many attempts were made to reach a peaceful settlement with Michel Aoun, and many people volunteered to try and find such a settlement. These attempts continued until midnight Friday night. While everything was ready for military action, there was total willingness to enter into a political settlement. Aoun, however, was more determined to hold on to his position. He thought that everything which was being done was being done to intimidate him. The lightning like operation was carried out in the early hours of dawn. Although some people expected the operation to last at least one day, it was over before nine o'clock. That is, the operation was over after no more than two hours. By the time the sun came out, what had been the hard line position which Aoun had maintained during the night turned into flight when Aoun forgot about his wife and three daughters and fled by himself in a half-track. Escorted by another half-track, Aoun went to the French Embassy where he took the guards and the ambassador by surprise. Loud and terrified screams were heard: "Open the iron gates. The general is coming and danger is imminent." The iron

gate was opened and then closed, thereby bringing an end to the tragedy in which Aoun had acted. This was a genocidal drama in every sense, a drama in which thousands of people were killed, injured and maimed, and billions of dollars in property were lost and destroyed.

The iron gates of the French Embassy were closed behind an officer whose only qualifications for leadership, it turned out, were the ability to cause bloodshed, to say foolish things, and to involve those who are closest to him in difficulties. His memory was such that he could not even remember to protect the destiny of his wife and children.

The crisis of the defeated general shifted from B'abda Palace to the French Embassy where it interacted with Lebanon once again. The crisis which the general created from the French Embassy could hurt Lebanon even further. It could even hurt Lebanon's relationship with France if the French position remains unchanged.

It is certain that Aoun's bloody ending has most certainly given rise to the hope that there will be an early ending to this civil war which has ravaged the country for over 15 years.

I believe that starting immediately the task of forming a new government which represents all the political parties and forces in Lebanon should be the next step. This would be "the peace and construction government." By the time the gate of the French Embassy closed behind the rebel, Aoun, the present government will have completed the tasks it set out for itself. These tasks are represented in the following points:

1. Enacting and ratifying constitutional reforms.
2. Restoring the unity of official institutions.
3. Ending the rebellion and restoring the unity of the army.

The peace and construction government has broad opportunities now to achieve the following goals:

- First, a general, official and national declaration can be made, immediately after the government is formed, to disband all the militias in a limited period of time, not to exceed three months.
- Second, a general national declaration is to be made deploying Lebanon's legitimate forces over all Lebanese territory, starting with the capital, Beirut, and ultimately covering all Lebanese territory. This deployment is to be carried out according to a specific timetable.
- Third, the process of political and economic construction is to be started, members of the disbanded militias are to be retrained so they may join Lebanon's legitimate institutions, and an effort is to be made to improve the economic situation.
- Fourth, the implementation of constitutional reforms is to be completed, and deputies are to be appointed until the number of deputies is 108, as stipulated in the al-Ta'if Agreement and in the new constitution.

- Fifth, Lebanese-Syrian relations are to be arranged within the framework of the al-Ta'if Agreement and Lebanon's national wishes. These relations are to be based on the integration of the two countries' political, security, and defense concerns in a manner that respects the sovereignty and the independence of both countries.
- Sixth, an effort is to be made to work through UN Security Council resolutions, especially Resolution 425, and through Lebanon's Arab and international relations to bring about Israel's withdrawal from all Lebanese territory.
- Seventh, all national, political, and diplomatic efforts are to be shifted to support and embrace the national resistance and to consider it the foundation for liberating the occupied land. All the Lebanese people and their political leaders without exception are to embrace this resistance.

[AL-HAWADITH] What do you think will become of Aoun? Will he be allowed to leave after the efforts the French [made on his behalf]?

[Al-Amin] Aoun will certainly not be allowed to leave Lebanon until he is put on trial and the authorized courts find him innocent. If he is not found innocent, he will receive the punishment which the court finds suitable to the actions he committed against the country and against citizens. There is no doubt that in taking this ill-considered step to interfere illegally in Lebanon's internal affairs, France was acting on the basis of its colonialist impulses. This situation must become the first step to correct and rebuild French-Lebanese relations on the grounds that France is a foreign country which must respect Lebanon's wishes and Lebanon's legitimate government and its decisions. France must give up its dreams about Lebanon and its paternalistic feelings toward Lebanon or some of the Lebanese. France must know that Lebanese Christians, like all the Lebanese of other sects, are Lebanese Arabs before being Lebanese Christians. France must know that it is not the protector of Lebanese Christians. It must know that Lebanon protects its own citizens without such interventions. France must know that it will hurt the Lebanese and its relations with them if it persists in its interventions. By protecting Aoun France is not only interfering in Lebanon's internal affairs, but it is also persisting in going too far in stirring up sectarian tendencies and fears to keep Lebanon in a state of civil war.

[AL-HAWADITH] What are your impressions about what happened in the recent meeting which took place between the Syrian leader and the American ambassador in Damascus?

[Al-Amin] There is no doubt that since Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, Syrian-American relations have been at the forefront of American concerns. There is also no doubt that this relationship between the two countries has had a direct effect on Lebanon. This has been the case since the onset of the Lebanese crisis. It has been noticed that since the U.S. secretary of state visited Damascus, the

course of relations between the two countries has taken a new turn. Although we cannot say that relations between the two countries have stabilized, I believe that many factors led to improving relations between them. This is because the two countries went through periods, especially after the Camp David Accords were signed and after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, when relations between them were vehement and harsh. The clash between Syria and the United States reached its peak when Syrian and American forces became engaged in combat in Lebanon's skies.

Now, however, relations between Syria and the United States have taken another, more important turn based on the fact that Syria has its own distinguished role in the area. Syria also has a principal role to play in two major problems: the Arab-Israeli conflict on the one hand, and the conflict in the Gulf, on the other. Syria's role is not less important than that of the United States. Syria stopped all U.S.-Israeli attempts and thwarted all Arab-American-Israeli attempts to impose an American-Israeli solution on the question of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It played a distinguished role in the Iran-Iraq war, and it deactivated to a large extent the Arab and American role whose aim was to intimidate Iran and abort its Islamic Revolution. Today, Syria appears to be a principal and effective power in its position on the question of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. Syria's position is such that it can neutralize any goal on either side of the conflict. That is why American activities aimed at improving relations with Syria are now becoming prominent. The Americans know the character of President Hafiz al-Asad quite well. They are familiar with his style, with his relentlessness, and with his maneuvers which have left their mark on the past and will leave their mark on the future by shaping the course of events in this area. The Americans, therefore, cannot ignore this distinguished position which Syria holds today in the midst of the conflict which is going on in the area, whether we are talking about the conflict in the Gulf or the one in Palestine.

Recently, meetings between Syrians and Americans on all levels seem to indicate that the two sides are getting closer to each other. Americans and their western allies are showing greater flexibility and more understanding of Syria's important role and its ability to take action. Syria thus acquires a more distinguished role as well as a free hand in dealing with many issues. It is being said, for example, in an attempt to re-read the Syrian position, that Saddam Husayn swallowed an entire country in a matter of six hours. He took over its territory, its oil wells, its material possessions, and its institutions, and he abolished its national currency and its citizens' passports and identity cards. Hafiz al-Asad, however, went into Lebanon 16 years ago. After all these years he is still talking about how necessary it is to set up a strong, legitimate government in Lebanon that can impose its authority over all Lebanese territory so that Syrian troops can withdraw from Lebanon. This illustrates how important Syria's role is and how good its reading of

history, of the present, and of the future is. That is why Syria gets a bigger role to play in dealing with wars in this area and with the grave developments unfolding in Palestine and in the Gulf as well.

[AL-HAWADITH] What effects do the new political alliances in the Arab region have on the situation in Lebanon? How do you see them?

[Al-Amin] The Iraqi occupation of Kuwait was the principal impetus behind reexamining Arab positions and reconsidering the Arab alliances which existed before Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. There were three Arab blocs then: the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC], and the Maghreb Federation.

The first council, the GCC, consisted of Saudi Arabia and the countries of the Gulf. Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen made up the second council, the ACC; and the countries of the Arab Maghreb made up the Maghreb Federation. Only Syria and Lebanon remained outside these three blocs. It was obvious that Syria's role and its position made that country stand out amidst these blocs. Syria felt that the circumstances which caused the formation of each bloc were different and that the blocs were nothing but temporary political alliances. Hafiz al-Asad was always proposing what he called an alternative policy of Arab solidarity against the Zionist occupation. The safety valve for the survival of this solidarity lay in the Arabs assuming the same position on the question of the Israeli occupation and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to establish their independent state on their national soil. But the Arab alliances collapsed suddenly as Iraqi tanks rolled over Kuwaiti oil wells, and Syria's position, a position free from all alliances and councils, rose to the fore. Once again and from the very beginning, Syria proposed the question of Arab solidarity, and President al-Asad called for an Arab summit hours after Iraq's military operations against Kuwait. He said that Arabs united in solidarity could find an Arab solution to this question that would preclude foreign intervention and prevent the use of foreign troops in Arab lands. Al-Asad's appeal, however, was lost in the confusion of the Arab position. Days later President Mubarak redressed the situation when he called for an Arab summit which failed to come up with a single Arab solution to the problem. That summit, however, confirmed that a new Arab reality had been established. Arab positions were examined and sorted out anew, and what clearly emerged as a principal power was the unified Syrian-Egyptian position.

I believe this is an important matter. It is a major turning point in the future of Arab politics, and it will have major consequences on the Arab future. Although President Mubarak did manage to restore Egypt's historic role in the Arab nation since he came to power in Egypt, he realized after what happened in the Gulf that the Egyptian-Syrian relationship was the basis for correcting the Arab course in general. The nature of developments confirms that fact, and the presence of army troops from

Egypt and Syria in Saudi Arabia and in the United Arab Emirates to defend these two countries confirms that Arabs united in solidarity, particularly Egypt and Syria, can do what is required to protect the Arab situation and establish a new security system for the region. Arabs united in solidarity can confront the dangers that are falling upon them in Palestine or in the Gulf.

As far as Lebanon is concerned, Egyptian-Syrian relations have had and are having a positive effect on the situation in Lebanon. As far as the region is concerned, the question of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the joint Egyptian-Syrian role will have an extremely important effect on convening an international conference on the Middle East. They will also have an extremely important effect on the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions regarding the occupation of Arab territory in 1967, the occupation of part of Lebanon's territory, and confirmation of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to establish their national entity on the soil of Palestine. Activating the Syrian-Egyptian role will have an extremely important effect on Arab relations with the world, and particularly with the five superpowers. The position taken by Egypt and Syria on the Gulf and the two countries' support for UN resolutions regarding the withdrawal of Iraq's occupation forces from Kuwait and the restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government laid the groundwork for the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Gulf. They opened the doors through which the implementation of Security Council resolutions regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict will become possible.

[AL-HAWADITH] How do you see the situation in south Lebanon where Palestinian forces and pro-Iranian forces are stationed? These forces are active in that part of Lebanon, and they are also on a direct line with Israel.

[Al-Amin] There are outside factors exercising control over that situation. One such factor in particular is the continued Israeli occupation of the border strip. Other armed forces, which can be Palestinian or Lebanese forces with distinguished relations to Iran or other Arab or Islamic countries, are there for that reason. That is why the growing relationship between Syria and Egypt and the continuing relationship between Syria and Iran will have a positive effect on Lebanon's legitimate government when it acts to establish its authority over south Lebanon. The strength of the relationship between Syria and Iran was confirmed by President al-Asad's visit to Tehran and the statement which was issued by the two presidents, al-Asad and Rafsanjani, confirming the need to put an end to this Lebanese chapter. Doing that would force Israel, which has been occupying the border strip under the pretext of securing its northern borders, to face a new reality regarding its occupation. When the government of Lebanon establishes its authority there, Israel's occupation will no longer be justified, and its position will be exposed to the world, and that will help the implementation of Resolution 425 which requires Israel to withdraw from the occupied strip. I do not believe that present circumstances would allow Palestinian forces to interfere with an Arab solution, and that is

advantageous to the growth and development of a national solution in Lebanon.

[AL-HAWADITH] The absence of any coordination between Syrian leaders and their allied forces in Lebanon has been noticed. Has Syrian leadership shifted to another stage of coordination and communication in which keeping track of conditions in Lebanon through legitimate government channels is now satisfactory?

[Al-Amin] There have been developments in the situation in Lebanon. Lebanon's legitimate government has become a principal ally of Syria, and representatives of Syria's allies in Lebanon are today a part of that government. That is why the government assumed its normal role in charting relations between Lebanon and Syria. This does not mean, however, that Syria's relations with its Lebanese allies are being exposed to danger or to a setback. Quite the contrary. Today, more political forces are aspiring to build relations with Syria now that Syria's unshakable position on Lebanon as well as the integrity of that position, which some had questioned, have been confirmed. Communications conducted by those who used to consider Syria Lebanon's only enemy confirm that future political alliances inside Lebanon cannot be the same ones which existed during the war. War has its allies, and peace has its allies. These are the enduring principles and rules of conflict.

[AL-HAWADITH] After its 15 years of experiences dealing with the Lebanese question, does Syria still have doubts about the credibility of political parties that are active in the eastern area?

[Al-Amin] There is no doubt that what Syria experienced in its relations with the political forces in the eastern areas may not have been encouraging, as far as form is concerned, but, in politics, emotions have no place and, in politics, parties to a conflict do not maintain constant positions. The Syrian position, however, has one, single distinction: Syria has been against the civil war from the very beginning, and it has been for a strong Lebanese authority that believes in political and constitutional reform and in putting emphasis on the Arab character of Lebanon and its lasting and enduring role in Arab issues in general. This constant Syrian position has been confirmed today more than any time in the past. Active forces in the eastern area have started reconsidering and reexamining their positions on this basis, that is, on the basis of the constant Syrian position and the need to find common denominators with it. Syria did not object in the past to a meeting with any party regardless of that party's attitude toward Syria, if that party changed its position and understood the nature and the truth about the Syrian position. Syria's experience with Ily Habiqa provides the best evidence of that fact. In the interests of such an approach in Lebanon, Syria was willing and remains willing to meet with any party that breaks its relations with Israel and reconsiders its internal policies with regard to political reform.

[AL-HAWADITH] Much was said a short time ago about the simultaneity of closing the file on the hostages in Lebanon and ending the state of rebellion. It is being said that this will happen in a very short period of time. How accurate is that statement?

[Al-Amin] There is no direct relationship between releasing the hostages and ending the rebellion. The question of the hostages has to do with problems antedating the rebellion. Ending the rebellion, however, may be an effective factor in expediting steps to end the hostage situation. I believe that the coming months will bring about a happy ending to the question of the western hostages in Lebanon.

MOROCCO

Planning Ministry Conducts Field Study of Manufacturing

91AA0074D Rabat AL-MITHAQ AL-WATANI
in Arabic 4 Oct 90 p 4

[Article by Sayyid Ahmad Sahil: "Field Study of the Industrial Sector in the Eastern Region"]

[Text] The regional commission of the Ministry of Planning recently completed a field study on the present-day industrial units that exist in the city of Oujda. On the basis of that, the commission prepared a study that was published last July.

It centers on two basic points: first, the most important aspects of the industrial sector in Oujda; and second, the industrial fabric of the city of Oujda.

The first part of the study casts light on the most important stages of industrial development in the eastern region, and especially in the province of Oujda.

Thus, efforts made by the state, in addition to intensive local participation, especially since work began on the 1973-77 five-year plan, have made the eastern region a pivot for industrial development that aims essentially to create conditions favorable to reducing the level of regional differences.

In fact, the eastern region, in addition to what it has in the way of basic installations of national and international importance such as ports, airports, railroads, and roads, also has important investments in the water and farming sectors such as dams and irrigated areas and the reclamation of fallow land and pasturage.

The eastern region has experienced unparalleled industrial investments which aim to achieve orderly and balanced regional development. In this respect we may mention the most important industrial achievements, such as a compound for steel manufacturing in El Nador, the cement of eastern Moroccan, the foundries of Wadi al-Hamir, the gas bottling centers in Oujda and El Nador, and the heat generation plant in Jerada, in addition to several small manufacturing units.

On the other hand, in 1988 the industrial arena of the eastern region added 218 industrial units, including 125 units in the province of Oujda, or 57 percent of the total regional total. They include 80 industrial units located in the city of Oujda.

As for the second and last part of the study, it concerned itself with defining and presenting several conditions that were revealed by the results of the study, which was done on 78 industrial establishments. These conditions appear as follows:

The most important advantages of the diverse industries in the city are the industrial market, the stimulation of work, the encouragement of investments, the movement of industrial establishments to the industrial region, and advertising and publicity.

This urban center of the province offers great advantages compared to other cities, for it is gradually rising to form a real industrial axis, especially for small and medium establishments, which are known to be able to offer more job opportunities.

Thus the industrial sector in the city of Oujda guarantees permanent work for more than 1,800 persons, and 3,600 seasonal positions.

By virtue of its advantageous geographical location following the development of North African relations, the city of Oujda plays a strategic role in the new economic course, which makes it a vital center for initiative, creation, and renewal.

Iraqi Invasion Reportedly Costs Companies \$80 Million

91AA0074A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
3 Oct 90 p 9

[Text] The head of the association of Moroccan exporters stated that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait has cost Moroccan companies \$80 million, and threatens the loss of thousands of jobs. He said that delayed payments by Iraqi importers have reached \$1.2 million, and that \$5.2 million, the value of exports covered by clearing arrangements, were also owed, as were \$5.5 million, the value of purchases under letters of credit. A total of \$21 million included in export credits is owed. In addition to that there are goods ready for shipment valued at more than \$10 billion.

In his estimation about \$4 million was spent on primary materials for exports destined for the Gulf region, where the value of suspended sales is \$24.3 million under the clearing program, and \$9 million as bank credits.

SYRIA

Ambassador to Egypt on Gulf, Arab Issues

91AE0191A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
7 Dec 90 p 32

[Interview with Syrian Ambassador to Egypt 'Isa Darwish by 'Usama 'Ajjaj in Cairo; date not given: "Syria's Ambassador in Cairo 'Isa Darwish to AL-HAWADITH: No Peaceful Solution Unless Iraq Withdraws From Kuwait"]

[Text] The importance of AL-HAWADITH's interview with Syrian Ambassador to Egypt Dr. 'Isa Darwish may well lie in the fact that it is the first such full interview exploring Syria's stance regarding the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Could this stance change? What is the Syrian view of Washington's proposals for security arrangements; Iraq, and the placing of all the region's crises in a single basket; the mission of Syrian forces in Saudi Arabia—offensive or defensive?; and many other questions.

The interview with the Syrian Ambassador follows.

[Ajjaj] It seems logical that we should begin with what Syria's stance vis-a-vis the crisis caused by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait really is. There are fears that the Syrian position may have been altered or replaced, with specific reference to the official Syrian declaration issued recently. Some sources worry that this reflects a new stance.

[Darwish] I assure you that the Syrian stance concerning Iraq's invasion of Kuwait is clear and straightforward. It is based on the resolutions of the Cairo Summit, the principles of international law condemning invasion and occupation of the lands of others, and the annexation of land by force. For these reasons, we supported the resolutions issued by the Security Council regarding the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Our criticisms of the United States should not be viewed as unusual; Syria does not subordinate its policy to that of any other nation in the world. Syrian policy essentially springs from the interests of the Arab people of Syria and a desire to protect the interests of the Arab nation. We criticized U.S. policy for its dealings with Israel and for supporting it with loans, aid, and weapons, at a time when Israel is expelling Arab residents and attempting to replace them with new settlers. This contradictory American policy of rejecting the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait while favoring Israeli policy in the occupied territories leads us to condemn and warn against a double standard, especially since the United States has justified its aid to Israel by claiming that it is concerned about a possible Iraqi attack against it. Therefore, while we have condemned the Iraqi invasion and demanded its withdrawal from Kuwait and the restoration of legitimacy, this does not mean that we support U.S. policy regarding Israel or its attempts to benefit from the current situation in the Gulf. We want America, as the superpower, to be on the side of justice and peace,

and to be on the side of Arab right, whether it be our right to the Golan; the Palestinians' right to establish an independent state in the occupied territories, or the right of the Lebanese to liberate the South of Lebanon. I reiterate that Syria's policy is one of principle on behalf of right, justice, and peace in any region of the world, calling for the application of U.N. resolutions and the principles of international law to all disputes in all parts of the world.

[Ajjaj] It is rumored that the latest Syrian stance resulted from information reaching the Syrian leadership concerning a plot which would have Washington eliminate Iraq's military capability while Israel launched an attack on Jordan and Syria. Is there any truth to this?

[Darwish] I can not say that this is a plot that has been uncovered, because ever since its establishment, Israel has openly declared that it will attack Syria and the Arab states, be they on its borders or more distant. This actually occurred when it struck Iraq's nuclear reactor, PLO headquarters in Tunis, and as it continually bombs Lebanon. This is not an innovation in Israel's expansionist policy. The statement issued by Syria serves as a warning that American policy must not continue to rely on Israel as a strategic ally in the region. The United States must be aware that such a policy towards Israel runs counter to peace and stability interests in the region and counter to its own interests as well. On the contrary, this would call on us to think that any role given to Israel to benefit from the situation resulting from the Iraqi invasion will draw the region into a struggle against Israel and the United States. We in Syria will always be on the side of any Arab people who find themselves exposed to Israeli aggression or that of its supporters.

[Ajjaj] It appears that Syria is not behind a military solution to the crisis. Do you not believe that the failure to respond to the call for an Arab summit amounts to blocking the last way open for an Arab solution, and opening the door to a military solution which no one wants?

[Darwish] We say that Syria supports any political solution, which is what we have been calling for since the first day of the invasion, and we continue to do so. Syria feels that the initiative is still in the hands of the Iraqi leadership, and that it must declare that it will withdraw from Kuwait. When that happens, any Arab summit conference, especially that to which King Hasan issued an invitation, will be of some benefit. But if we are to discuss this issue and attendance of a summit in light of the continual Iraqi refusal to withdraw, and in light of its rejection of the Cairo Summit resolutions and to respond to the principles of international law, what would be the meaning of a summit conference? What would it discuss? It would be useless. We therefore announced that we would not attend the summit in light of Iraq's conditions for attendance because they would paralyze it and are impossible to meet. We call on Iraq, out of concern for its people, its accomplishments, and its future, to make an immediate and speedy withdrawal. History will not

forgive the Iraqi leadership should they fail to respond to the call for peace. It will result in the mass suicide of an Arab people for whom we care deeply.

[Ajjaj] How does Syrian policy view the attempt to place all Arab issues into a single basket, requiring that all be resolved at the same time, such as the situation in the Gulf, the Palestinian problem, and the situation in Lebanon?

[Darwish] Our point of view has always been that regional peace and security can only be achieved through an international conference in which all the parties, including the PLO, participate to resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute in accordance with principles of international law and U.N. resolutions. We called for this before the Iraqi invasion, and we continue to call for it now. Iraq's attempt to link its withdrawal to an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, however, gives the latter the opportunity to stay in Palestinian territory forever while Kuwait and its people are hostage to Iraq, even though Kuwait is a fraternal Arab country. There is a difference between occupation by an enemy and that by a brother. We demand an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, so that Baghdad can help us stand as one Arab body to liberate our occupied land, peacefully or through war. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait has greatly weakened the Arab position and created sharp divisions, with Israel as the major beneficiary. It had been isolated by the intifada [uprising] and the Palestinian people, and made use of the time to absorb hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants settling in the Arab territories.

[Ajjaj] Why has Syria undertaken to send new forces to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia? Is their mission there to defend the Kingdom against aggression, or to participate in an attack on Iraq should war break out?

[Darwish] First of all, let me say that we sent our forces in response to a request from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and in implementation of the resolutions of the Cairo Summit. In our view a balanced military presence is a means of instilling confidence in our Saudi Arabian brothers that Arab security can be achieved by Arab forces, of reassuring the Iraqis that Egyptian and Syrian forces can constitute an Arab force separating American troops from those of Iraq if it withdraws from Kuwait, and of facilitating the termination of foreign presence in the region. We would like to emphasize that in Syria's

view, the fate of the region originates in the countries comprising it, with Arab assistance.

[Ajjaj] We still question the nature of the mission of Syrian forces.

[Darwish] Their mission is to defend the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is not an offensive mission. Syria has given reassurances that we did not go to Saudi Arabia to fight the Iraqi people inside Iraq. Rather, our purpose is to assist with an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and to facilitate the withdrawal without an inter-Arab war.

[Ajjaj] There are news reports of an imminent tripartite summit meeting between King Fahd and Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad. Are they correct?

[Darwish] I have no specific information in that regard, but consultation and meetings are taking place continually. There was a foreign ministers' meeting involving the three countries, and President Mubarak did meet with King Fahd during his tour of the Gulf and with President al-Asad during his visit to Syria. The channels of communication are open. It would not be unusual for meetings to be held at the level of three countries, or more, to enhance coordination and consultation in service of issues affecting Arab countries.

[Ajjaj] The issue of security arrangements has arisen and created a controversy since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Where does Syria stand with respect to this American proposal?

[Darwish] We reject the security arrangements proposed by Washington and any American presence in the region. In particular, Saudi Arabia has emphasized since the very beginning that in the aftermath of an Iraqi withdrawal it would ask that foreign forces be removed from the region. We reject these arrangements for two reasons. First, it is the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait that created the pretext for an American presence in the region. When the reason, i.e. "the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait," is gone, the American presence ends. Second, the U.S. arrived in response to a request from Saudi Arabia. It can not continue to stay against the wishes of those who invited it in, i.e. the Saudi government, which will no longer feel it needs these forces once Iraq withdraws from Kuwait. We emphasize that the responsibility for Arab national security is a task for the Arab states. With the cooperation of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the other Arab countries, Arab national security can be maintained.

BANGLADESH

Law Against Illegal Arms Promulgated

91AS0396A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 12 Dec 90 p 1

[Text] The Acting President Mr Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed on Tuesday promulgated an ordinance bringing necessary amendments to the Arms Act of 1878 and prescribing life imprisonment or any other rigorous imprisonment which would not be less than ten years or fine for the possessors of illegal arms, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

The new ordinance, the first of its kind after the Acting President took over power from ousted President Lt. Gen. Ershad on 6 December, was promulgated with a view of improving the country's law and order situation. The objectives of the ordinance said that it was necessary for taking stern legal measures against the possessors of illegal arms as it was learnt from various sources that huge arms and ammunitions are in the possession of various quarters under the existing situation.

The ordinance which will be titled as the Arms Act (Amendment) Ordinance, 1990, brought amendments in the Section 19. Instead of the words "imprisonment for a term which may be extended to three years, or with fine or with both" the Section 19 was substituted with the following words, "imprisonment for life or any other rigorous imprisonment which shall not be less than seven years, to which fine may be added.

Amending further the Section 19 (A) which earlier read "transportation for life or any other shorter term, or with imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years, or with fine," the new amendment will now read "imprisonment for life or rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years."

While promulgating the ordinance, the Acting President felt that the existing punishments under the old act were not sufficient to deal with the present situation.

Committee to Investigate Corruption Formed

91AS0395A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 18 Dec 90 p 1

[Text] The Government has decided to form a three-member committee, headed by a Supreme Court Judge, to enquire into the allegations of corruption and misuse of powers by the former President Hussein Muhammad Ershad, members of his Council of Ministers and others, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

A Press Note issued on Monday said the Committee has been entrusted with the responsibility to enquire into and examine the allegations of corruption and misuse of power by the former President, members of his Council of Ministers, Government officers and employees and officers and employees of the statutory organisations.

UNB [United News of Bangladesh] adds: The Committee came amidst mounting pressure from political parties, students and professionals to try Ershad on charges of corruption and abuse of power.

Ershad, who relinquished power on 6 December bowing to a mass upsurge, is now under house arrest.

Police have arrested former Deputy Prime Minister Shah Moazzem Hussain and placed Ershad's Home Minister Mahmudul Hasan under house arrest.

The Government has constituted an 8-member committee: to catalogue different state and personal belongings of deposed President Hussain Mohammad Ershad.

The government on 15 December constituted the Committee comprising Md. Azizul Huq Bhuiyan, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Shamsher Alam, Deputy Commissioner (North) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Executive Engineer of Works Directorate (to be nominated by the Ministry of Works), representative of the Military Secretary to the President, representative of the Army headquarters, representative of Military Engineering Services, representative of T&T Board and representative of the former President.

The Government has instructed the concerned ministries and departments to send the names of the committee members immediately to the Home Ministry, sources said.

Foreign Ministry Official Meets Foreign Diplomats

91AS0392A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 13 Dec 90 pp 1, 10

[Text] Presidential Adviser on Foreign Affairs Fakhruddin Ahmed Wednesday expressed the hope that foreign governments and international organisations would continue to be cooperative in the organisations would continue to be cooperative in the economic development and social progress of Bangladesh [as published], reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

Addressing the heads of the diplomatic mission at the Foreign Ministry in Dhaka he said the changes which took place in the country in the last few days were reflective of the will of the people and hailed by all political parties and sections of people without any exception.

Magnitude of the changes were of "revolutionary" nature, the Adviser said but pointed out that they were achieved rather peacefully without much disruption or dislocation in the normal activities.

Mr Fakhruddin Ahmed referred to the task of the caretaker government to hold elections within three months and said everyone in the country wished the interim government to succeed in holding free and fair elections and hand over power to democratically elected government.

The Adviser referred to Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed's declaration that Bangladesh would adhere to policy of "friendship to all and malice to none" and said the country would stand by all bilateral and international commitments in the field of foreign affairs.

Bangladesh's relations would be cordial with neighbouring countries—friendly relations would continue with Islamic nations and the nations would play an important role in the United Nations, Non-aligned world, Commonwealth, OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] and the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation], he said.

UNB [United News of Bangladesh] says: Advisor on Foreign Affairs Fakhruddin Ahmed said the fundamental principles of the country's foreign policy will remain unchanged despite the change of the government.

"The basic concept of Bangladesh foreign policy is friendship to all and malice to none," Fakhruddin said.

Addressing his maiden press conference at the Foreign Office Wednesday afternoon, the Adviser said "our close friendship with neighbours and special relations with the Islamic world will continue."

Ershad's Passport

Mr Ahmed told a questioner that former President H.M. Ershad had been asked to surrender his earlier passport and added that he had to procure a fresh Private Passport.

Everything would be done for the sake of national interest, he told a questioner when asked if the government would hold talks with foreign governments to recover the wealth accumulated by the former President and his men aboard.

"We want your cooperation to discharge a meaningful foreign policy" the Adviser said and lauded the role of the press in the recent events that took place in the country.

Foreign Secretary Abdul Ahsan was also present at the press conference.

Biographical Sketch of Shahabuddin

91AS0393A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 8 Dec 90 p 3

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Following is the life-sketch of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, Chief Justice of Bangladesh, who assumed the office of the Acting President of Bangladesh.

Born in 1930 in village Pema of Kendua in the greater Mymensingh district, his father late Talukder Risat A. Bhuiyan was a renowned social worker and philanthropist of the locality. After passing the Matriculation and Intermediate examinations he took admission into the

Dhaka University in 1948, took B.A. (Hons) in Economics in 1951 and M.A. in International Relations in 1952 as a resident student of Fazlul Haq, Hall.

He entered the Civil Service of Pakistan in 1954 through a competitive examination; completed training in the Civil Service Academy, Lahore, and in the United Kingdom, attended a special course in Public Administration in Oxford. He was Sub-Divisional Officer of Gopalganj and Natore, and for his administrative ability his Sub-division (Natore) was adjudged as one of the best-administered Sub-Divisions of the country. He was Additional Deputy Commissioner, Faridpur, and for his efficient management of revenue affairs and land settlement matters he earned high appreciation from the board of revenue, in particular from its senior member, Mr Hatch Barnwell.

He was transferred to the Judicial Branch from June, 1960, worked as Additional District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka and Barisal, and as District and Sessions Judge, Comilla and Chittagong and then as Registrar of the High Court of East Pakistan. He was elevated to the Bench of the High Court on 20 January, 1972. Acted on deputation as the Labour Appellate Tribunal for two years, 1973 and 1974. In that connection, he attended a number of international conferences and seminars on Labour Law, Social Security Legislations, Labour Management Relations and Productivity; in particular, he attended a Round Table Conference on Labour in Geneva and another in Silva de Fesano (Italy).

He was Chairman, Bangladesh Red Cross Society from August 1978 to April 1982 in addition to his duties as Judge of the Supreme Court. As Chief Executive of the Red Cross Society, he reorganized and practically rebuilt the Society, raised its image in the sphere of International Red Cross and earned wide applause for the society's successful implementation of a number of emergency relief operations and cyclone preparedness programme. He set up a number of Rural Hospitals and Maternity Centres; in particular, the Teligati Red Cross Hospital (Netrakona) which is financed by the Swiss Red Cross. He represented Bangladesh Red Cross Society in a number of international conferences and seminars which included, among others, the Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the Islamic countries (OIC) in Bengazi (Libya), a seminar on Red Cross and Primary Health Care in Frunze, Kirghizi (USSR), International Red Cross Conferences in Jakarta and Manila. He was member of the Bangladesh Government delegation to the 10th Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Islamic countries (OIC) held in Fez, Morocco in 1979 where the question of setting up an International Islamic Red Crescent Society was debated. He visited various Red Cross Societies Institutions of North Korea on an invitation of the North Korean Red Cross Society and also visited Red Cross Societies of China and Japan in 1981. On his initiative the Family Planning and Population Control was included in the main function of the Bangladesh Red Cross.

He was appointed a Judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on 7 February 1980 and was confirmed in this office on 15 April, 1981. He is reputed to be a strong disciplinarian and hardworking officer all-through and his disposal of cases in all branches of law is one of the highest in the country. A great number of his decisions have been reported in the Dhaka Law reports, Bangladesh Legal Decisions and Bangladesh Case reports. In Service matters Election disputes and Labour-Management Relation, some of his judgements and observations have been highly appreciated. His decision on the 8th Amendment of the Constitution of Bangladesh was hailed as a 'landmark' in the constitutional development of the country. There, among other things, he has criticised the tendency of all Third World Dictatorships to abrogate Constitutions for self-aggrandisement and coterie rule under the thin veneer of democracy, for curtailing fundamental rights of citizens, violation of human rights, challenge to people's sovereignty and denial of the Independence of Judiciary and substituting rule by Fiat for rule of Law.' He also deplored taking away by the Executive in the country of the traditional powers of the High Court regarding appointment, promotion, transfer, leave and control of subordinate judiciary.

He was Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry established under the Commission of Enquiry Act on the police firing on students in mid-February of 1983. He was Chairman of the National Pay Commission in 1984 and submitted a report on the basis of which upward revision of pay-scales was made.

As Chief Justice he attended the International Appellate Judges Conference in Washington D.C. in September 1990.

He has two sons and three daughters. His eldest daughter, Dr (Mrs) Sitara Parveen is Assistant Professor of Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Dhaka University. His other daughter, Mrs Samina Parveen is an Architect. His son, Mr Shibly Ahmed is an Environmental Engineer living in U.S.A. His other son, Mr Sohael Ahmed is a college student, while his youngest daughter Samina Parveen is a student of Fine Arts College.

Boards of Financial Institutions Dissolved

91AS0397A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 11 Dec 90 p 1

[Text] The Government Monday announced the dissolution of the Management Board of all nationalised banks, insurance and economic organisations, according to an official handout, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

New management boards will be constituted soon.

A decision to this effect was taken at the first meeting of the Council of Advisers held in Dhaka Sunday with Acting President, Mr Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, in the chair.

Aid Consortium, Others, Pledge Support

91AS0398A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 14 Dec 90 p 10

[Text] Heads of missions of the members of Bangladesh Aid Consortium and chiefs of international and United Nations organisations on Thursday expressed their continued support and cooperation to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

They also supported the measures taken by the interim government.

The assurance of support and cooperation came at a meeting held in Dhaka under the auspices of the Economic Relations Divisions to discuss issues relating to utilisation of foreign assistance in Bangladesh.

Chaired by the secretary of the Economic Relations Division Enam Ahmed Chowdhury, the meeting was also addressed by the ambassadors of Japan, USA, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and high commissioners of UK, Canada, Australia and the chief of World Bank mission in Dhaka.

Discussions were also held regarding the improvement of project processing procedures, measures to be taken for expediting the implementation of project and aid disbursement.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Enam Ahmed thanked for support and cooperation of development partners of Bangladesh and assurances of support to the interim government. He said the government was determined to create an economic momentum.

Mr Enam Ahmed expressed the determination of the government to implement the decision taken at the mid-term review meeting and other agreements entered into with the government bilaterally and with the international agencies.

Planning Commission member Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Planning Secretary Q.S. Alam and senior officials of ERD [External Resources Division] were present in the meeting.

Communists Call for United Government

91AS0399A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 13 Dec 90 pp 1, 10

[Text] Some leaders of opposition have floated the idea of a national government with the three alliances and pro-liberation and democratic forces till the solution of various national problems. They are in favour of reaching an understanding with the democratic political forces based on some specific programmes.

Arguing in favour of the formation of a national government they said one of the objectives of the proposed government would be to clear up the mess accumulated in the country over the years of autocratic rule.

BSS [Bangladesh News Agency] adds: The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) on Wednesday called for a united government for national regeneration with the three alliances and all pro-independence democratic forces till the resolution of different national problems.

The CPB, in a political resolution after a two-day central committee meeting of the party with Dr Sarwar Ali in the chair, also called upon the patriotic and democratic political forces of the country to reach an understanding based on some definite programmes.

According to the CPB resolution, the programmes are: to clean the residue left by the autocratic regime, to institutionalize democracy and democratic norms, to restore discipline in the economic sector, to reactivate production-oriented efforts in mills, factories and firms, to bring back healthy atmosphere in the campus by removing anarchy and session-jam, to stop hoodlumism with the recovery of unauthorised arms, eliminate communalism, to establish the foundation of a pro-people neutral, honest and corruption free administration, to stop erosion of moral values and to take initiative to redress flood and population problems.

The meeting observed that the political parties would maintain democratic code of conduct in running their activities despite differences and different party strategies.

The meeting called upon the political alliances to consolidate their victory over autocracy and be vigilant against any kind of conspiracy to frustrate the victory.

The meeting paid homage to the martyrs of the movement and different professional groups including the students, teachers, physicians, journalists, lawyers, cultural activists, workers, peasants and others for their participation in the anti-autocracy movement.

General Secretary of Bangladesh Workers Party Rashed Khan Menon on Wednesday called for the establishment of a national consensus government for the next three years.

He was explaining the resolution adopted by the political bureau of the party at a meeting of party workers who had come from different parts of the country.

Mr Menon said establishment of national consensus government had become necessary for maintaining the unity built up through mass movement for democracy, for making all political alliances and parties pledge-bound to democratic principles and for providing a sound base to democracy and democratic institutions.

He said it was the expectation of the people who aimed at revitalising economy shattered by misrule and plunder by autocratic Ershad.

He said people had launched the movement and gave blood for initiating a permanent democratic process and life style and establishing spirit and values of the liberation war along with freeing themselves from the misrule of autocratic Ershad.

Mr Menon said there was no alternative to unity of the three alliances for fulfilling the aspirations of the people. This pledge was also expressed through the unanimous modality of three alliances which was given for the removal of Ershad. There was no way to back out from that pledge, he said.

The Workers Party leader said confidence of the people in elections had to be restored by holding elections on the basis of that pledge.

World Bank Recommendation on Aid Reported

91AS0383A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 12 Nov 90 pp 1, 10

[Text] The World Bank has reaffirmed its support for greater assistance to Bangladesh and recommended to those donors who are yet to finalize aid to do so with a higher contribution in mind in future bilateral consultations, reports BSS [Bangladesh News Agency].

The bank, which organized the mid-term review of the aid performances of Bangladesh recently in Dhaka also recommended that the donors consider appropriate additional support to the country in the light of the Gulf crisis to help Dhaka reinforce its policy reforms, the meeting sources said.

The two-day meeting, that concluded Wednesday, was convened to review the "action programme for policy reform for fiscal 1991," as agreed upon in Paris in April during the aid consortium meeting. Mr Shinji Asanuma, Director of the country department of the World Bank, chaired the meeting which was attended by more than 100 delegates from 26 donors and agencies.

Mr Asanuma, in his concluding statement, remarked that the "overall sense" of the meeting was that the recent economic performance of Bangladesh government has been "commendable" in many areas covered by the action program. He, however, noted that in several areas the pace of reforms needed to be accelerated and scope broadened.

Canada, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany and Italy are donors who did not make commitments at the consortium meeting because of "budget formalities" in their respective countries. The donors pledged 1.8 billion dollars at the Paris meeting.

Finance Minister Abdul Munim inaugurated the review meeting.

Considerable Progress Welcomed

The meeting's chairman welcomed the "considerable progress" made by Bangladesh in many areas of the

action programme, particularly in financial stabilization and macro-economic stability. Restoration of country's export competitiveness attained through a combination of sound fiscal and monetary policies as well as active exchange rate management were also lauded by the Chairman in his concluding speech. The prompt reaction of Bangladesh government to the difficulties caused by the Gulf crisis both in terms of passing through the increase in petroleum prices and in restraining expenditure were also highly appreciated.

The meeting noted "substantial progress" made by the government in domestic resource mobilization. While commending the steps to facilitate proposed introduction of VAT (Value Added Tax), caution was given that thorough preparations were needed before embarking on implementing new tax measures.

The chairman, who appreciated the interest rate liberalization process, pointed out that government's policy reforms in agriculture, industry and financial sectors had provided a more "favorable climate" for long-term growth and also helped reducing wasteful rent-seeking activities. The progress in the phasing out of non-tariff import barriers and the rationalization of the high rates of tariffs in imports were praised.

The Chairman noted that many speakers in the meeting were of the opinion that Bangladesh has moved closer to self-sufficiency in food. They, however, cautioned that serious considerations should be given to examining alternative policies to support crop diversification and the longer term requirement of the agriculture sector. Many speakers in their remarks on positive impact on food-grain production in the country welcomed the steps taken by the government in this regard to enhance private sector's role in distributing minor irrigation equipment and fertilizer.

The Chairman said the meeting took note of government's substantially increased allocation for education, health, family planning and the social sectors in the Fourth Plan period and the protection of those sectors in the prioritization of exercises. He said some speakers also noted the beneficial impact of faster growth due to the establishment of "Palli Foundation", an organization set up by recently to channel funds to the poor.

The speakers, the Chairman said, felt encouraged by the adoption of the Draft environmental Action Plan, welcomed the creation of the new ministry (Ministry of Environment and Forest) to address important issues on environment.

NGO's Contribution

While noting the "significant" policy reforms made by the government to facilitate NGO's [nongovernmental organizations] contribution in development, some members, however, mentioned that regulations in Bangladesh were still much more restrictive than in other countries, the chairman said.

The chairman said many speakers had inquired about the progress made by the government in formulating a sound public expenditure programme within a realistic resource envelope. While appreciating the prioritization exercises and the three-year investment plan, it was emphasized in the meeting that the planning exercises be expeditiously done and results be operationalized and disseminated within the governments to avoid cost escalation beyond available resources.

The Chairman mentioned that Bangladesh government had welcomed the suggestion made by many speakers for further consultations with donors on improving aid utilization procedures. He also noted that the attention of the donors was drawn to the recent initiative taken by Bangladesh government to integrate women more effectively in development process.

The chairman of the meeting concluded that if the aid was to be utilized effectively, the government needed to deal expeditiously, in consultation with donors, several outstanding issues that address major development needs, especially its poverty alleviation objectives.

Constitution Challenged on Women in Parliament

91AS0384A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 24 Nov 90 p 10

[Text] Dr Ahmed Hossain, a senior advocate of the Supreme Court, Appellate Division had challenged the Constitution (10th Amendment) Act, 1990 by which the Parliament had purportedly amended the provision of the Constitution by substituting a new Clause in Art 65, for Clause (3).

The new Clause runs:

"Until the dissolution of Parliament occurring next after the expiration of the period of ten years beginning from the date of the first meeting of the Parliament next after the Parliament in existence at the time of commencement of the Constitution (Tenth Amendment) Act, 1990, there shall be reserved thirty seats exclusively for women members, who shall be elected according to law by the members aforesaid: Provided that nothing in this Clause shall prevent a woman from being elected to any of the seats provided for in Clause (2)".

The unamended Clause (3) of Art 65 runs: "Until the dissolution of Parliament occurring next after the expiration of the period of fifteen years from the commencement of this Constitution there shall be reserved thirty seats exclusively for women members who shall be elected according to law by the members aforesaid: Provided that nothing in this Clause shall prevent a woman from being elected to any of the seats provided for in Clause (2).

The Constitution came into force on 16.12.1972. The privilege to women under Clause (3) expired in 1987.

A Division Bench comprising Mr Justice Fazle Hossain Mohammad Habibur Rahman and Mr Justice Abdul

Hasib of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court has issued a Rule Nisi on November 13 on Bangladesh, represented by the Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice and Secretary to the President, Presidential Secretariat calling upon them to show cause why Clause (3) of Art 65 of the Constitution (10th Amendment) Act, 1990 (Art 38 of 1990) published in the Bangladesh Gazette on June 23, 1990 shall not be declared to be ultra vires, illegal, unlawful and invalid or such other or further order or orders passed as to this court may seem fit and proper. The Rule is made returnable within six weeks from date.

Dr Ahmed Hossain who appeared in person, contended, inter alia, the tenure of Clause 3 of Art 65 of the Constitution expired on 16.12.87 and thereafter the impugned amendment by the present Parliament is void and illegal and ultra vires and beyond the power of the Parliament as it alters and materially effects the basic structures of the Constitution. He further submitted that election of women members in the reserved seats by vote of previously elected members in the general seat is not in conformity to democracy as provided for in Art 122 (1) of the Constitution for election to Parliament to be held on the basic adult franchise. He submitted that amendment is contrary to democracy and equal rights of the citizens as envisaged in the Constitution of the Republic.

INDIA

Shekhar Talks With Newsmen, Gives Interview

Domestic Issues Discussed

91AS0391A Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN
in English 25 Nov 90 p 1

[Excerpt] New Delhi, 24 Nov—The new Government is to take "immediate and corrective" steps to "revitalize" the Indian economy even though the task will be a "challenging one," the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, has said, reports PTI [Press Trust of India].

"I agree the maladies are many and the problems are numerous, but no nation could afford to throw up its hands in despair," Mr Chandra Shekhar told the accompanying correspondents while returning from Male after the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit.

He said his Government would take all necessary steps to tackle the various problems that had come up.

He said he was confident of handling the economic problems, "as India, a big country as it is, has great industrial potential" and an infrastructure.

Also "people are ready to make sacrifices," he added.

Asked what was going to be his top priority, Mr Chandra Shekhar said that there was no number one or number two priority.

He said problems of law and order and soaring prices and inflation were there and all these had to be tackled together.

He, however, said law and order was "very important" and without it "we can't have prosperity." "This is a struggle of the people and vitality of the economy had to be restored. We hope to take all corrective steps," he added.

To a question on the new industrial policy, Mr Chandra Shekhar said the country needed one. The earlier Government formulated a "broad framework" but could not finalize the details of the policy.

Asked if he proposed to take certain short-term measures like import of essential commodities to bring down prices, the Prime Minister said that imports were certainly not the answer to the problem as it involved foreign exchange and the country was facing a difficult balance of payment position.

He said that there were several related matters in tackling spiralling prices and there could be no "off the cuff" solution to it. It had to be attacked from various fronts and the Government would take all possible measures, he assured.

Asked if he was contemplating stiff tax measures in the light of the resource crunch the country was facing, Mr Chandra Shekhar said that budget could not be discussed.

He said one could not go on burdening the poor with taxes but at the same time the Government would have to mobilize resources for its development activities. "We will have to find some way out."

To a question that many States had not been represented in his Cabinet, Mr Chandra Shekhar said his Janata Dal(S) did not have members from many States and hence he had some problem in giving representation to all States. Also, he said, he could not take anybody from outside.

Regarding reported differences in his party over the Cabinet formation, the Prime Minister said: "I do not want to go into any controversy. It is an individual matter."

Mr Chandra Shekhar said a good beginning had been made in negotiations with Pakistan and "I am quite satisfied with the talks." [passage omitted]

Remarks in Bangalore

91AS0391B Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
24 Nov 90 p 1

[Text] Bangalore, 23 Nov—The Prime Minister today said the fifth summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC] leaders had achieved much more than expected, reports UNI [United News of India].

Talking to reporters during a brief stopover here on the way to Delhi from Male, he said: "In many areas, we covered new ground. There was an atmosphere of understanding and cordiality during the meeting. We hope to continue in the same spirit."

Asked about the breakthroughs at the conference, he said whatever was recorded was the "collective achievements of the SAARC nations."

On relations with neighbouring countries, Mr Chandra Shekhar said they were cordial. However, there was a problem with Sri Lanka—a large number of refugees were arriving in India from the island nation.

About the impression among neighbouring countries that India was growing into a "big-brother" in the region, he said: "I have been talking about this for years together that we are not going to brow-beat any of the smaller nations, nor are we going to allow ourselves to be brow-beaten by others."

The Prime Minister said the meeting with his Pakistani counterpart marked the beginning of a "new chapter" in Indo-Pak relations.

Mr Chandra Shekhar went on to add that he had a very cordial meeting with the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr Nawaz Sharif, during the SAARC summit meeting at Male. Mr Sharif was "very appreciative of the problems" faced by the two countries, he added.

Asked if he had discussed the Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir issues with Mr Sharif, the Prime Minister said he would not like to go into the details of the subjects that figured during the meeting.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said there was an "intuitive response" from Mr Sharif's side.

Asked if he had succeeded in breaking the ice with Mr Sharif, he quipped "there was no ice at all. I did not find any ice at that meeting."

After arriving in Delhi, the Prime Minister said there was no immediate possibility of talks with Mr Nawaz Sharif but the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries would be meeting soon, adds PTI [Press Trust of India].

Earlier in Male, the seven-nation SAARC today took a decision to extend regional cooperation to the core economic areas and laid the foundation for including mass media, biotechnology and environment under the scope of its activities.

Adopting the Male declaration at the conclusion of the fifth SAARC summit, the leaders of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, who met after a gap of two years, vowed to make their organization "vibrant and result-oriented" by adopting a more business-like approach in the meetings.

The convention will have to be ratified by each country in six months.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said the decisions taken at the summit would result in greater regional cooperation and people-to-people contact. In his address to the concluding session of the summit, he said it had laid a firm foundation of cooperation, extending it to environment related issues. The establishment of a proposed fund for identifying regional projects would also help in regional cooperation, he added.

The Bangladesh President, General H.M. Ershad, expressed satisfaction over the decisions of the summit and said the summit had been able to restore the momentum of the organization, which had "decelerated" since Islamabad.

The Pakistani Prime Minister described the exchanges among the SAARC leaders during the summit as "meaningful and productive" and said by gradually extending the scope, the process of enlarging the structure of the South Asian cooperation provided a good chance for future cooperative endeavours.

The Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Mr D.B. Wijetunge, described the summit outcome as "rewarding" and welcomed the rationalization of the association's work to respond to the rapidly changing global environment.

Bhutan King Jigme Singe Wangchuck called for building on the "Male spirit" to create a climate of lasting peace and friendship in the region.

The leaders decided that to maintain focus on the problems of the girl child, the years 1991 to 2000 would be observed as the SAARC Decade of the Girl Child. They reiterated their resolve that the welfare of the child in general and said the girl child would figure at the top of their priorities [as published].

PTI adds: The SAARC leaders today called for massive international assistance to compensate the loss suffered by their countries because of a sharp decline in remittances, set-back to their exports and severe strain on their balance of payments position due to increased oil price.

They called for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and the restoration of its legitimate Government.

The Male declaration called for a peaceful resolution of the issue and stressed that the Gulf crisis had dealt a severe blow to the South Asian countries' economies.

On international issues, the Male declaration expressed the hope that the talks between the two superpowers on arms control would culminate in the conclusion of an agreement for substantial reduction in their nuclear arsenals leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Talks En Route

91AS0391C Madras THE HINDU in English
27 Nov 90 p 7

[Quotation marks as published]

[Excerpts] New Delhi, 26 Nov (PTI, UNI)—The Government may consider reducing the recent hike in the prices of petroleum products if the situation in the Gulf improves and stabilises, the Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, said today.

"If the international prices of petroleum products come down and the Gulf situation stabilises, we will consider reduction in the hike," he said, while talking to a group of presspersons, who accompanied him to Bombay.

The Government did not want to reduce the prices of petroleum products now and raise them again if the Gulf situation deteriorates. Let the situation stabilise, the Prime Minister said.

Talking about the price rise and the delicate economic situation, the Prime Minister said the country was undoubtedly facing a difficult period. He said there was, however, no need for panic as the problems could be overcome through improved financial discipline.

"I do not want to minimise the crisis, but it is not such that it cannot be managed," Mr Chandra Shekhar said, adding the country had the infrastructure, resources and vitality to deal with the situation.

"I shall not be repeating the same which the previous Government had done. I will not like to throw up my hands in despair and say nothing can be done," the Prime Minister said.

Left parties cooperation: Asked whether he would seek the cooperation of the left parties to solve the current problems, he said, "I have not been able to understand the anger and anguish of the left parties. It is better if they cooperate in solving the problems facing the nation."

Necessary measure: Mr Chandra Shekhar described the arrest of leaders of various Akali Dals and the ban on their meeting in Anandpur Sahib as a necessary measure.

The step was necessary to prevent the Punjab problem from becoming further entangled. He said the Government had information that a proposal which could cause misunderstanding was to be passed at the meeting.

The Prime Minister said issues such as Punjab, Kashmir and Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhoomi could only be resolved through discussions and negotiations and his Government was willing to talk to anyone.

Offer to extremists: The Prime Minister asked the extremists to come to the negotiating table to resolve the Punjab problem. He was willing to talk to any citizen of India, whatsoever might be his views, to solve the problem.

He said the situation in Punjab was quite bad. His endeavour would be to convince the militants to give up the path of confrontation because this would not help anybody. "It is self-defeating," Mr Chandra Shekhar said. [passage omitted]

Relations with Pak.: The Prime Minister said the Government would support efforts made at the non-political level to improve India's relations with Pakistan.

Mr Chandra Shekhar said he did not know under what compulsion his Pakistani counterpart, Mr Nawaz Sharif, had made such statements as "nothing, including the Shimla agreement, is binding" and reminded him that a political initiative was the only way to sort out bilateral problems.

When his attention was drawn to Mr Sharif's observation that "Pakistan will continue to provide more political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris," the Prime Minister said, "I do not know on what basis he had made such statements. I have to verify."

"I have no comment to make if there is some compulsion for the Pakistan Prime Minister to make such statements," he said.

The Prime Minister said he hoped Mr Nawaz Sharif would continue to show the same spirit which he "showed at Male during his meeting with me." That spirit was the only way to better Indo-Pak relations, he said.

"There is no other way to solve the problems in the sub-continent," Mr Chandra Shekhar said, when asked if a political initiative would help when Pakistan was aiding and abetting terrorists in Punjab and meddling in Kashmir.

"The situation will further worsen if nations in the sub-continent fight with each other. The region is already in the grip of stark poverty. The situation will only be aggravated," he said.

Against confrontation: Stating that India did not want to fight anybody, the Prime Minister said the path of confrontation was fraught with danger and hoped Pakistan would desist from adopting such a course. "Still, if somebody wants to have a confrontation, it may be his bad luck or good luck, I do not know," he said.

In his talks with Mr Nawaz Sharif, Mr Chandra Shekhar said, he got the impression that Pakistan was also keen to resolve the bilateral issues peacefully.

The Prime Minister agreed with a questioner that the people of India and Pakistan want relations between the two countries to improve and the irritants removed and said, "I will be happy if artistes, intellectuals and literary figures exchanged visits. The Government of India is willing to provide them all facilities. But these depend on the attitude of the rulers of Pakistan."

Asked about the possibilities of New Delhi making a fresh start to resolve the Kashmir problem, Mr Chandra Shekhar said local people should be included in the State's administration, but it should be seen at which level this should be done.

Asked if a revival of the dissolved Assembly in Kashmir was possible, Mr Chandra Shekhar said, "This is in the hands of the judiciary. Let the judicial verdict come and we will take a decision."

Centre-State relations: On Centre-State relations, Mr Chandra Shekhar said there should be better understanding. He was against the Centre's interference in matters concerning the States, but simultaneously, the State should fulfill their obligation to the Union, the Prime Minister said.

Not trying to topple DMK [Dravidian Progressive Foundation] Govt.: The Prime Minister sought to dispel the impression that the Centre was trying to topple the DMK-headed Government in Tamil Nadu, but said the current situation must be brought under control. "I can't help if there is apprehension. There is no question of toppling the DMK Government," Mr Chandra Shekhar said.

He spoke of the presence of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu and said it was the responsibility of the State Government to deal with the situation.

About the lack of representation in his Government from the south, Mr Chandra Shekhar said, "The unfortunate imbalance is beyond me. There are very few MPs [Members of Parliament] in my party from the south. We shall try to correct the position."

The Prime Minister assured the people of the south that Hindi would not be imposed on them saying, 'Languages cannot be imposed. They only develop. No language can be killed or imposed.' The Centre's policy was to encourage all languages, he said.

Regarding the question of Hindi being used throughout the country, Mr Chandra Shekhar said no language can be imposed on anyone and if any language is powerful enough, it will evolve and develop on its own.

He said if the southern States were not receiving translated documents from the Centre, it should soon be done.

Regarding the Sarkaria Commission's report on Centre-State relations, he said he would not take any hasty decision on it. [passage omitted]

STATESMAN Interview

91AS0391D Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
1 Dec 90 Supplement pp 1, 3

[Interview with Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar by Sunanda K. Datta-Ray; first eight paragraphs are THE

SUNDAY STATESMAN introduction; date, place not given; quotation marks as published]

[Text] As Prime Minister of India, Chandra Shekhar suffers from two grave drawbacks. He heads a team of defectors; and his ministry will last just as long as Rajiv Gandhi wants it to.

Nor has he escaped personal criticism. The ashrams to which the Prime Minister retires are said to be luxuriant sylvan oases; some of the small-time businessmen he associates with do not enjoy a particularly savoury reputation; and there are persistent stories of the role of big money in his elevation.

The high hopes that were evident when Rajiv Gandhi and Vishwanath Pratap Singh started in office are conspicuously absent this time. The Indian public prefers unknown gods with a radiant halo. Chandra Shekhar is a homespun personality who has been with us too long—his lanky frame always draped in not very sparkling dhoti and kurta, his grey bristles and gentle smile are familiar features—to inspire any sense of exhilaration. The face looks gaunt now, the eyes harrowed, unkind Westerners compare Chandra Shekhar with Darth Vader of Star Wars. Always the Great Solitary of India's political jungle, he has no private publicity machine to project him as "Mr Clean" or "Mr Cleaner."

But as Chandra Shekhar reaffirms in this conversation with Sunanda K. Datta-Ray, he has always remained faithful to the Congress movement's original philosophy. "I am a very conservative person in holding my views. I am not the kind of man who goes on changing his views every day." And, indeed, what the nation can expect from him while he is at the top are consistency, sobriety, a lack of glamour perhaps, but a certain dogged pursuit of secular values and an egalitarian economic strategy.

We have known a glittering playboy of the western world and a feudal princeling of ancient lineage. Man of the people that he is, Chandra Shekhar brings the common touch to the prime ministership after them. "I am willing to work with anybody but there will be no compromise on taking food to the toiling masses, giving dignity of work to our poorer classes, giving rights to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and assuring the minorities that they are as good citizens of this country as any other person."

He is absolutely without pride in that mission. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] opposes him but though he cannot endorse the BJP creed, he is ready to seek its help. "In certain matters I am willing to take cooperation of BJP also. If the nation is in danger I shall go on knocking at the door of the BJP—'Don't take this extreme position, otherwise the country will disintegrate'."

Such a man would have been ideal for the job, to heal India's wounds and provide food and shelter to its impecunious millions. Chandra Shekhar does not chase lofty global dreams like Rajiv Gandhi. He is not obsessed by a single investigation like Vishwanath Pratap Singh.

He has his feet sturdily on the ground and his gaze set on India's barren landscape. The SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit in Male and the recent visit of King Jigme Singye Wangchuk of Bhutan showed that others are also impressed by his commonsense approach and his deep commitment to welfare.

The weakness lies in how he became Prime Minister. From that arises the bigger danger of whether he will be allowed to continue in office. Chandra Shekhar can do a great deal of good but it may not be in the interests of those who prop him to allow a successful prime ministership.

D-R: There is this impression that over the years you have been waiting and biding your time to become Prime Minister. Has there been a lot of strategic planning on your part or did the last Government collapse on its own...

D.S.: I tell you honestly that I don't know on what basis this impression had been created. I mean, people may not believe, but I have never applied any strategy in politics. I started in political life from zero and to this date I have always been motivated by circumstances or force of the political events that have led me to this position.

When the Janata Government was formed, when the Janata Dal was formed, it is known to all people that I was not in favour of V.P. Singh getting the leadership of Janata Dal. I was also against his becoming the Prime Minister or the leader of the Janata Dal Parliamentary Party. Whatever methods were used to elect him the leader, I even did not object to them. I tried my best to (maintain) utmost restraint in spite of all my reservations about the functioning of Mr V.P. Singh's Government...I tried to cooperate in every way so that the Government (could) function. Whenever I was asked to give my opinion on issues that were before the nation, candidly I gave my views, though most of the time they were just ignored.

D-R: Would you like to expand on these issues?

C.S.: (Issues about) which I never spoke of in public, issues that disturbed me whenever they came before the Government. Issues like Kashmir, Punjab, Assam, or happenings in Tamil Nadu, Ayodhya...everything. So, on all issues I gave my opinion, in writing and also orally. I felt they were determined to act differently from what I suggested to them.

Take for example Kashmir, though it is not of much consequence now. As soon as I came to know that they were going to appoint Jagmohan, I wrote a slip to Mufti, (telling him) this would be a disaster, please don't do it. Then I had a long discussion with V.P. Singh twice. I said to him good or bad, Farooq is there. He is a friend. Try and involve that party (National Conference). Otherwise you will have nothing to bank upon. I had a long discussion with Mufti in the presence of five others. I

tried to persuade him. (Then) I left for Kathmandu where I got the news from Comrade Surjeet that they had appointed Jagmohan.

D-R: You went to Kathmandu in defiance of the Government...

C.S.: No, not at all. No sooner the invitation came, I had a long discussion with the Foreign Minister and he agreed. I told him, consult your Prime Minister, there should be no ambiguity about me. Subsequently, I had a long talk with him again in the presence of Nepali Congress leaders. Everything was done with their consent.

D-R: But this is not the impression they gave us.

C.S.: They did not give anybody this impression. And it is not secret. I know my duty as a member of the party...I mean, a member of Parliament, that if I go to a foreign country I should get the consent of the Government, whatever the Government may be—I may agree, I may not agree (with the Government). After that when I came to know...

D-R: This is interesting. I put the question of your visit categorically to Mr Gujral at the time. He said Mr Chandra Shekhar does not represent Janata Dal's point of view nor the Government's point of view.

C.S.: I don't know...As soon as it (the invitation from the Nepali Congress) came—and not only I, you (can) ask Comrade Surjeet, you (can) ask Farooqi of Communist Party—Gujral told me not only should I go, but (I should) ask Farooqi, the Communist Party, and even the Congress people to go. This you may verify from Gujral again.

Then I said, check up with the Prime Minister. I came to know through the Press that they were intending to send a delegation under the leadership of the Foreign Secretary to negotiate and come to some settlement with the King. I asked Gujral again: This is the news in the papers. Gujral said, 'No, we shall not do anything without consulting you.' Three days later the news came that the delegation was leaving in another two days. After that I did not consult them any more...I just went to the Speaker and made a statement in Parliament. You can say that was defiance.

D-R: Was there any difference of opinion between Gujral and you on the Nepal situation?

C.S.: I do not understand that Gujral had any philosophical difference with me. I know Gujral and Gujral's views are the same as mine. But I think that this Government was so vacillating that it could be pressurized by anybody and everybody at any crucial moment.

D-R: But Gujral took a practical approach to the neighbourhood...

C.S.: In international affairs you have to take a practical approach. There I do not like to blame Gujral for that.

D-R: Is your present alliance with the Congress(I) also a "practical" arrangement or does it represent an affinity of views?

C.S.: No. Affinity of views to the extent of the immediate perspective of the situation. I thought that at this moment mid-term poll would be a disaster. This perspective was shared by the Congress(I). So I cannot say that this is based on some deep philosophy or ideology. But we were responding to the situation in a similar manner and we had decided to work together.

D-R: Are you saying that the only basis of unity is to avoid a mid-term poll?

C.S.: No, not only basis. I think that in my opinion—an opinion I have always held—the poorer countries cannot afford confrontation all along the line. We should try to evolve areas of accord among ourselves and also with other countries like ours.

I think if you compare the manifestos of most of the political parties in this country, on most of the views and most of the points which are of immediate nature, all the parties believe in the same things. If we decide to work only on these things...Take, for example, removing poverty, not in general terms but giving the necessary values to people...elementary education, primary health, no discrimination based on caste, creed and religion—these are things which are being at least adhered to in words by all the political parties.

Is this not enough of a programme for the coming one, two, five years for a country like India? If on these issues we agree sincerely, we can cooperate though, of course, there are bound to be differences when it comes to evolving a strategy, because if we have to meet the basic human needs of the people, we have to adopt a totally different economic and social balance.

D-R: If this is enough basis for unity with the Congress(I) today, then 13 years of your political career, ever since you left the Congress are negated...

C.S.: I did not leave the Congress. The only thing is in 1971 Congress promised something. Soon after the election Congress went back on its commitments. In 1974-75 it was the basic issue of democracy on which I did not leave the Congress but Congress put me in jail. I have never believed in bravado. I do not make tall claims. It was my compulsion.

D-R: But you had strong differences with the Congress leadership?

C.S.: Strong differences of viewpoints were there even with Janata Party and with Janata Dal but it depends. If differences come in a party, I am not just for remaining in party or government or in some position. In 1975 Emergency was imposed in this country. For Opposition leaders it was a compulsion to go to jail. For me it was no compulsion. For me it was a choice. I do not want to boast anything, but it was a choice for me to remain outside the Government.

Since 1967-68 it was not that I would not have got at least a Deputy Ministership in the Government of Mrs Gandhi or Morarji Desai... I do not want to go into it but many people say I was waiting all this time for the post of Prime Minister. If I think call of duty has come and I should answer it, I am not going to be deterred by these slogans that I was always power hungry. There was never any necessity for me to remain in politics for getting power in the Government.

D-R: Over all these years I have not thought of you as being very different from the basic Congress ideology.

C.S.: Basic Congress ideology, that is true. And I don't understand this logic that in order to avoid Congress rule we should have an alliance with BJP when people are saying that fighting BJP is the issue today. Then what is the harm in an alliance with Congress? Moreover, I do not hold the view (that fighting the BJP is a priority). Even today I don't say that my aim is to fight BJP. In certain matters I am willing to take cooperation of BJP also. If the nation is in danger I shall go on knocking at the door of the BJP—'Don't take this extreme position, otherwise the country will disintegrate.'

People may misunderstand. But on basic issues I am not going to compromise. That is what I said in Parliament House. I said I am willing to work with anybody but there will be no compromise on taking food to the toiling masses, giving dignity of work to our poorer classes, giving rights to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and assuring the minorities that they are as good citizens of this country as any other person.

D-R: The original Congress promise. Would the logical course for you not be to go back to the Congress fold?

C.S.: That will take ages. This is not the going or coming. Future developments will depend on how much understanding there is between the Congress party and our group, on the implementation of programmes and how much coordinated functioning there is.

I tell you one thing. If remaining in the Congress party I could not compromise on issues, so being outside the Congress why should people expect that I should compromise? But if on these issues that have been the basic Congress philosophy from the days of Mahatma Gandhi, there is agreement and if that philosophy or attitude persists in the Congress party, then what is wrong in working with it?

D-R: Did you then leave only because of personal factors?

C.S.: No I shall not go into personalities. It may be because of circumstances also. Sometimes we also make mistakes in understanding the reality of the situation.

D-R: How would you define your present party's policies?

C.S.: The whole thing is that basically I have not changed my views. I am a very conservative person in holding my

views. I am not the kind of man who goes on changing his views every day. Two points in a nut-shell. I have been repeating for more than the last 10 years, from 1970-71 that we are a scarce resource society, we have very limited resources. Our biggest asset in this country is manpower and if we want to develop resources, we have to utilize manpower. In order to utilize manpower we will have to get willing cooperation of the people because it is a democracy, because we can't coerce people to work. If we have to get willing cooperation of the people we have to assure them whatever we produce will be for the benefit of their children, not for the ostentatious living of the few.

This psychology has to be created. It has nothing to do with doctrinaire socialism. It is just to induce people to work hard, to inspire people to work hard, because it is the only way we can develop India. In this situation those who are privileged will have to make some sacrifice. As we are a democracy in this land of Gandhi and Buddha, people should make this sacrifice voluntarily. If they don't make (sacrifices) and people go on exploiting or oppressing certain sections of the population I feel that they are not serving their own interests because in the ocean of misery all round you cannot have islands of luxury.

So I think all these issues should be very clear. Work to everybody, that should be our theme, so that everybody can have a dignified living and produce that which is essential for the survival of human beings.

Secondly, try to compete with the best in the world, and in critical areas take their help, but depend upon your own resources, more so because a country of India's size cannot be bailed out by others. So self-reliance or Swadeshi—again, this may sound like a cliché or a slogan—but there is no alternative.

Austerity is not a mere slogan, it's an economic strategy for a debt-ridden Third World country. But the whole system is against austerity. I should not like to blame any individuals. It is very difficult fighting against the system but much more could have been done.

D-R: There was a feeling that the National Front Government respected State's rights and that we might have been heading for a better Centre-States equation?

C.S.: I don't know on what basis the feeling was there, but I assure you that our Government will never do anything to give any cause for apprehension in the mind of any State Government. Only one thing is there, that nothing should be done against the sovereignty or integrity of the country.

D-R: It is said that the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] has made you an offer and because of that you are taking a certain...

C.S.: Totally wrong. It has no basis. There are certain things which pointed to the DMK [Dravidian Progressive Foundation] Government but there is no basis to all

this gossip. I told the Revenue Minister that if anything is to be done I shall not do it in a surreptitious manner. I shall put it before the whole nation and before the government that these are things you are doing. But I assure you that neither DMK nor AIADMK has offered any support... I am the last person to take such support.

D-R: Normally I would have expected you and the Left Front in West Bengal to be in sympathy on many issues...

C.S.: This is what was my expectation also. I was surprised to see their attitude. I tell you honestly I have no explanation, unless they have some apprehension. This is all their own imagination, nothing from my side.

D-R: A subject that worries many people is Assam. It's not just the threat to the tea industry but to law and order and, indeed, the fear of secessionism. How do you feel about it now that elections are due in Assam?

C.S.: Only yesterday, the Assam Home Minister was here, and the day before yesterday the Chief Minister was here. I had a long discussion. I told them, 'You will have to assure that elections will be free and fair. That there will be no violence.' When I said free and fair I did not say only without violence. If nobody can come and people feel threatened, it is not free and fair election. The other thing is that there are certain reports that were brought to their notice not in my time but by the previous Government. Unfortunately, nothing has been done for the last six months.

D-R: The ultimate remedy is in the hands of the Centre...

C.S.: No, the ultimate remedy is in the hands of the people of Assam, but the State Government will have to take corrective measures about the distortions that have taken place as pointed out by the Rashtriya Morcha, National Front, Government of which they were a partner. They are not a partner with me, but those issues that have been raised by the previous Government deserve serious attention and satisfactory answers.

D-R: Is there any evidence of the Assam Government taking serious note of these issues?

C.S.: I shall not like to comment on that. It will be taken amiss. I shall only appeal to them that they should take note of them.

D-R: Even after you became Prime Minister, the Governor, Chief Secretary and D.G. Police have visited Delhi, so you have your own reports independently of the last Government.

C.S.: I do, and the reports don't differ.

D-R: Then you know how bad the law and order situation is. Even a newspaper that writes about it is threatened...

C.S.: I can only say this is very unfortunate and that I expect the Assam Government to take corrective steps.

D-R: It is said that the AGP [Assam People's Council] has promised you the Lok Sabha support of its MPs [Members of Parliament] if you agree to elections.

C.S.: This is again a canard that is being propagated. Elections will not be postponed because of this type of political consideration, nor will they be held for this type of gain. Elections will be held or postponed according to the exigency of the situation, according to the need of the hour in Assam where the people's rights are not mortgaged by anybody for any ulterior reason.

D-R: On Ayodhya...

C.S.: On Ayodhya, I again appeal to both sections of the people they should come to some understanding. There is a possibility for some understanding and it should be rigorously pursued. That will be the best course.

D-R: Do you see the temple-mosque controversy as symptom of a bigger alienation of the two great communities in the country?

C.S.: The whole movement has a tendency or potential to create a sense of alienation. This tendency should be discouraged from the very beginning but it cannot be discouraged by administrative or state power but by very basic people's cooperation. I think the situation can be repaired even now.

D-R: What, if any, solution do you have in mind for Punjab?

C.S.: The situation has worsened during last few months. I can only appeal to the people that violence will not solve the problem. I only hope they will come to understand the desirability of some...

D-R: But Rajiv Gandhi and V.P. Singh also appealed...

C.S.: But when I make this appeal it is not just hollow words. I want to tell them that this is the only course open. This is in the interest of all concerned. Sometimes the state has to take very unpleasant decisions. I only hope that it will not be forced on the Government to take unpleasant decisions. This is why I say that whatever may be the irritations, whatever may be their anguish, we have to forget the past.

I am one of those who have been feeling from the very beginning that their pride was hurt, they have an injured psyche. I don't stand on prestige. It is not a question of individual ego that will count in future. It is not only for our side, it is for other side also. It is a question of reciprocity. If I make a humble appeal, this should get a response. I have not lost faith in the goodness of human beings and I think this will touch the right chord to respond favourably. Otherwise we will have to find out some other way how to deal with the situation.

D-R: Does the same prescription apply to Kashmir also?

C.S.: Kashmir also. The same. I think everywhere, wherever there is insurgency or terrorist activities, I openly

say that I am ready and willing to work all out to have dialogue, to discuss and understand the feelings and try to assuage it as far as possible. My only hope is that there should be some positive response from their side. They should not try to coerce the state to come to some terms, nor should we try to coerce anybody to come to our terms. There should be an attempt to create an atmosphere of reconciliation and cordiality rather than hatred and confrontation.

D-R: Dialogue and discussion remind me of your debut at the SAARC summit.

C.S.: I have great expectations from this meeting. My only thing is that I am not a diplomat, nor have I dealt with this type of summit meeting. But as a citizen of this sub-continent, to which this SAARC organization belongs, I feel this is an area of poverty. In spite of all our brave words we have remained a poor entity in the world. If we fight among each other, we will not be able to fight against poverty, squalor, misery. So we should understand this limitation. For small things we should not create a psychology of confrontation spending more for so-called defence preparedness which is nothing compared with what the big powers have accumulated...

D-R: You are prepared to negotiate a reconciliation with Pakistan and China?

C.S.: Yes, I shall appeal to them to let us forget about the past. Not only that. In order to create that atmosphere, we should take some initiative to heal psychological tension. Why are there so many restrictions to travel between all these countries? Why cannot we create some atmosphere in which more free trade is possible in this area? We have put up unnatural barriers. I was just told that if we send something from Karachi to Bombay or Bombay to Karachi the freight is more expensive than sending something from Bombay to Singapore or Karachi to Singapore. This type of bottleneck is to nobody's advantage. We should come to terms on issues and matters which are of advantage to all concerned.

D-R: The big SAARC issue is a water management arrangement between India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

C.S.: I know about it, and everybody is losing. Take the case of Nepal. Nepal has tremendous hydro-electric generation capacity. Everybody [words unclear] they generate electricity only India can consume it. India knows that if they don't cooperate we cannot augment our generating capacity. But in spite of that we are not coming to any understanding for last 40 years. If we had taken up these projects Nepal would have been much richer and much more developed because of the revenue earned and India would have benefited enormously because of the power.

But sometimes in this type of game we don't even understand our own self-interest.

D-R: One obstacle to SAARC understanding is India's insistence that there can be only bilateral, not multilateral, cooperation.

C.S.: These matters can only be discussed item by item. There can't be a general thing about it.

D-R: You said you were not a diplomat. In fact, you are the first Prime Minister without any administrative experience. Is that an advantage or a drawback?

C.S.: I don't see any drawback, but whether it is an advantage or not will be decided.

D-R: One last question. It's been said that the Indian polity will finally settle down in three streams, the Left, the Congress and the BJP. What do you think.

C.S.: The picture looks like this today but I don't think this generalisation will apply in the future because, you know, I don't know what the Left will represent now. Left...Right...all these things will become out of date. There will be very little difference between democratic socialist or liberal socialist and Communist. All these angularities are going now. Governments in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are reaching where democratic socialists were in this country in the fifties. What Acharya Narendra Dev or Jayaprakash Narayan or Lohia were saying in the fifties is being said by Gorbachev today. Even Congress covers the same philosophy.

D-R: Does the Congress party represent all these points of view?

C.S.: Congress philosophy does. Congress philosophy has been by and large for democratic socialism. But implementation by the party sometimes becomes very ambiguous.

D-R: But that's now in your hands...

C.S.: Let us hope.

Chinese Intrusion Into Ladakh Sector Denied

91AS0401A Madras THE HINDU in English
29 Nov 90 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, 28 November—An External Affairs Ministry spokesman today denied a newspaper report that Chinese troops had intruded into Ladakh's Chushul Sector.

The spokesman said at a press briefing that the Chinese troops had not installed tents or bunkers or constructed roads on the Indian side of the Line of Control in the Chushul area.

The situation along the Sino-Indian boundary was peaceful and the two countries were engaged in a constructive dialogue for the peaceful resolution of all outstanding problems, the spokesman said.

Details on Prohibition of Anandpur Sahib Meeting

91AS0429A Madras THE HINDU in English
25 Nov 90 p 1

[Text] Chandigarh, Nov. 24—In a major Statewide crackdown, the Punjab Government today arrested scores of leaders of various Akali factions and other organizations and banned a meeting scheduled to be held tomorrow at Anandpur Sahib in Ropar district, apparently to forge Panthic unity.

The Akali Dal (Mann) chief, Mr Simranjit Singh Mann, the Akali Dal (Badal) president, Mr P.S. Badal, the Akali Dal (Longowal) acting chief, Mr Tota Singh, and Shiromani Prabandhak Committee chief, Mr G.S. Tohra were arrested from here while the Damdami Taksal chief, Mr Thakkar Singh, and other leaders were arrested from various places in the State tonight.

Top police brass went to Anandpur Sahib to thwart any attempts to hold the meeting.

The Government made it clear that the Akali Dal (Mann)-sponsored meeting would not be allowed since some anti-national elements had "definite intentions of announcing subversive programs of action."

A decision to hold the Anandpur Sahib meeting was taken at Jalandhar on November 17 when the leadership of various Sikh political and religious groups constituted a committee of the "big six" to give direction to the "Khalsa Panth."

Mr Mann was picked up by the police from his sister's house while Mr Tota Singh, was arrested from his house. The others arrested in Chandigarh included former Home Minister, Captain Kanwaljit Singh, former Advocate-General, Mr S.S. Grewal and Major General (retired) Narinder Singh.

Raids were also conducted on the houses of Akali Dal (Mann) General Secretary, Mr Ram Singh, and other leaders of the party and also the All India Sikh Students Federation general secretary, Mr Harminder Singh Gill. But these leaders are reported to have gone underground.

An official spokesman said the Government had viewed with concern the developments in the wake of desecration of religious places by agents provocateurs as part of a deep-rooted conspiracy hatched in a neighboring country. "The nefarious designs are aimed at creating communal disturbances, general disorder and conditions of lawlessness in order to weaken the country," he said.

"As part of the scheme of things, some anti-national forces have sought to further aggravate the situation by convening the meeting at Anandpur Sahib tomorrow, with the definite intention of announcing a subversive program of action intended to create disruption, disorder and a situation of confrontation with the Government so as to encourage the secessionist forces."

Police Officer Killed

Meanwhile the Tarn Taran Superintendent of Police (Operations), Mr Harjit Singh, and three security personnel were killed this morning when terrorists set off a landmine near the Rohiwala drain bridge in Tarn Taran town this morning.

An indefinite curfew has been clamped in the town after the killing.

While Mr Harjit Singh's gunman head constable Tarsem Singh died on the spot, the Superintendent whose ribs were broken, died on the way to hospital. Two Punjab Police constables Tarsem Lal and Manjit Singh who were also injured died in a private nursing home in Amritsar. The lower portion of their bodies were blown off. Constable Lakha Singh, who was driving the Maruti Gypsy, was stated to be out of danger.

According to a report from Tarn Taran, Mr Harjit and the five policemen were going to his office on the Amritsar-Tarn Road when the blast ripped the right side of the vehicle where the superintendent was sitting.

Police said the pieces of the body of the head constable were strewn around and the debris of the jeep blown a hundred meters away. The police control room said the explosion could be heard five kilometers away.

Police said this was the most powerful blast ever set off by the terrorists. They did not rule out the possibility of the use of undetectable plastic explosive in the mine.

Mr Harjit Singh was on the terrorists' hit list ever since he led an operation in which a top militant of the Bhindranwale Tigers Force of Khalistan, Sukhwinder Singh Sanga, was killed in Bhuller village in Tarn Taran area on November 3.—PTI, UNI.

Karnataka: Zilla Parishad Bill Deferred

91AS0316E Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
2 Dec 90 p 3

[Article by N. C. Gundu Rao: "Stiff Opposition Forces Bill Deferment"]

[Text] Bangalore, Dec. 7.—The ruling Congress(I) Party in Karnataka has to defer passing of the Zilla Parishad (Amendment) Bill in the face of filibustering tactics adopted by the truncated Opposition though the Congress(I) commands an unprecedented three-fourths majority in the House.

But does it mean the Congress(I) put off the enactment in deference to the wishes of the Opposition parties or was it a virtue of necessity in view of the opposition to many clauses of the Bill from within Congress(I) ranks? Though the answer to the question may vary according to one's political perception of the situation, the opposition from within seems to have much to do with the Congress(I) choosing to go slow.

The Congress(I) Legislature Party (CLP) endorsing the view of the KPCC(I) [Karnataka Pradesh (Indira) Congress Committee] to refer the Bill to a committee comprising representatives of the CLP, KPCC(I) and party leaders from the zilla parishads can serve as a face-saving formula. Party sources said the terms of reference of the committee have been finalised and the committee would submit its report to the CLP within December 15.

While many Congress(I) leaders seem to be vocal only in their criticism of the steep enhancement in the percentage of political reservation proposed for the Other Backward Classes, discreet inquiries in party circles reveal that several leaders are not happy with some of the other provisions of the Bill.

The non-major community leaders feel that there is an attempt to magnify the opposition to the disproportionate reservation now mooted but these leaders wonder how can these major community leaders belittle the damage sought to be inflicted on the system of vesting more powers in bureaucrats than the elected functionaries. These leaders are of the opinion, that Rural Development Minister B. Basavalingappa is oblivious to the adverse effects of such a measure on the party if it were to find itself in the Opposition again.

One senior Congress(I) MP [Member of Parliament] pointed out that the political parties which go out of the way to placate the weaker sections of society in the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections with an eye on their votes, develop cold feet when it comes to facing zilla parishad and mandal panchayat elections. This is because in zilla parishad and mandal constituencies these weaker sections cannot play any decisive role in the outcome of the election. Hence, some percentage of reservation for these sections is inevitable, the MP feels.

Introspection Needed: He also revealed on strict condition of anonymity that there were any number of instances in zilla parishads where major community members join hands cutting across party affiliations to deny the benefits due to weaker sections of society. If the Government has embarked on certain amendments to clip the powers of the zilla parishads and mandal panchayats the persons running these institutions must do some honest introspection on their conduct hitherto, the MP says.

But major community leaders accuse Mr Basavalingappa of bundling in the Bill the clause on hefty reservation with an intention of cutting the major communities to size. One Congress(I) leader is said to have been highly critical of Mr Basavalingappa's non-committal replies to the member's queries at the CLP meeting today as to whether party supremo Rajiv Gandhi had countenanced these amendments.

Another minister is also reported to have taken exception to Mr Basavalingappa failing to take the Cabinet into confidence about the discussions he had with Mr Gandhi during the former's unscheduled visit to Delhi in connection with the amendment.

But one Congress(I) MP, however, claimed that no substantial discussion took place between Mr Gandhi and Mr Basavalingappa in this matter during the minister's visit to Delhi.

Apart from former Rural Development Minister M. Y. Ghorpade, many senior Congress(I) leaders are reported to have been emphatic at the CLP meeting today that the amendment must be in consonance with the 64th constitutional amendment sought to be effected by Mr Rajiv Gandhi while in office.

Authoritative sources say that Mr Ghorpade had favoured the idea of referring the Bill to the Joint Select Committee though CLP General Secretary A. K. Ananthakrishna spiked the reports to this effect at the press briefing this afternoon. Mr Ghorpade was also not in favour of reducing the term of the panchayat raj institutions from five years to four years. He, in fact, found an ally in a senior Congress(I) MP who endorsed this view from outside.

Government Determined: But the State Government is said to be determined on slashing the term of these institutions by one year since senior leaders in the CLP feel that the party would not afford to face the ensuing Lok Sabha elections by allowing these elected bodies to stay in office which control over Rs. [rupees] 800 crore.

Many non-major community MPs were also of the opinion that the reservation to the other backward classes must be provided without robbing the major communities too much on the wrong side.

Indications are that the reservation to the other backward classes would be scaled down to 32 percent from the present 50 percent to ensure that the aggregate reservation would not cross 50 percent and the amendment would stand the test of law.

CLP sources confirmed that there was an announcement on the composition of the committee but it was retracted later since many members protested vehemently against the City-based legislators dominating the panel which had to decide the fate of panchayat raj institutions in a sense. Meanwhile, Chief Minister S. Bangarappa's air-dash to Bombay without attending the CLP meeting created ripples in party circles. While a Cabinet minister explained to this reporter that Mr Bangarappa had to rush to Bombay to see someone close to him who has been hospitalised, the others felt that the CLP leader's skipping the CLP meeting looked a bit odd.

Punjab: Factional Akalis Forming Single United Dal

91AS0316A Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
2 Dec 90 p 7

[Article by Surinder Khullar, DH News Service: "Stage Set for Unity of Akali Factions"]

[Text] Chandigarh, Dec. 1—The peaceful completion of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee elec-

tions and the unanimous choice of the office-bearers is a historic and momentous event in the 70-year history of the highest Sikh religious organisation. In the coming days all the three major Akali factions—Badal, Longowal and Mann—would try to resolve their much publicised differences and the factional war among the moderates, extremists and militants to facilitate the formation of a single Shiromani Akali Dal, most probably headed by Mr Simranjit Singh Mann.

Last week's events started with the announcement of Mr Mann at a Jalandhar Gurdwara meeting that the six top Sikh leaders would meet at the birth place of the Khalsa on November 25 to chalk out the future course of action for the Sikhs. The dark clouds had a silver lining: Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar ordered the Punjab Government to arrest all the six leaders and others "allegedly congregating at Anandpur Sahib under pressure from certain anti-national forces trying to fan communalism and separatism."

As part of the scheme, certain anti-national forces, the Government felt had sought to aggravate the situation by convening a meeting at Anandpur Sahib on November 25 with the intention of announcing a subversive programme of action to create disorder and a situation of confrontation with the Government.

A Government spokesman said that the Government wanted to thwart the sinister design to coerce these persons into submission to the mandate of the militants.

Constructive Role: Political observers dispute the assessment that the militants planned to buy and blackmail the six leaders, but feel that by arresting Mr Mann, Mr Badal, Mr Tohra from different places and lodging them together at the Burail jail in Chandigarh, the Government did play a constructive role in enabling the leaders to finalise unitedly Panthic matters, including the November 28 SGPC [Sikh Temple Management Committee] organisational elections which had always created bitterness and division among the Akalis.

The three top Akali leaders in 48 hours preceding November 28, ironed out differences and agreed on the need for Akali unity. As Mr Tohra offered to step down from the highest SGPC office after one of the most tumultuous and controversial tenures of 16 years, Mr Mann and Mr Badal went on to discuss the other office-bearers to reach agreement over the names of the other office-bearers and the 11-member SGPC executive.

Mr Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Mr Sukhjinder Singh and Mr Kuldip Singhwadala did the needed leg work with the active co-operation of the Punjab Government and helped their leaders forge Akali unity.

Mr Tohra was asked to suggest and name the leaders and Mr Mann and Mr Badal finalised the names and post for each person.

Fifty-seven-year-old Akali leader Baldev Singh Sibia was accepted as SGPC President, Mr Tohra's protegee Sukhdev Singh Libra, Sant Langowal's supporter Dalip Singh Mallunanangal and Mr Mann's candidate Bir Singh were unanimously elected by voice vote at the SGPC annual general meeting at the Teja Singh Samundari Hall. The names were read out to the members of Mr Sukhjinder Singh from a paper jointly signed by all these leaders who are at Burail jail here.

Tohra's Approbation: The unanimous election of the SGPC office-bearers was described by Mr Tohra as a victory for the entire Sikh panth. Others described the event as "watershed in Sikh politics" with Akali unity just round the corner.

However, those close to Mr Tohra know that he had been warned by the militants to opt out from the SGPC's affairs as he had already served for a very long period and done immense harm to the community. Even Mr Mann had earlier blamed Mr Tohra for the invasion of the Golden Temple.

The founding of the SGPC in October 1920 and the Akali Dal in December 1920 was a part of the religious political struggle of the Sikhs directed against the Mahants and vested interests in the Sikh shrines and also against British imperialists during the first quarter of the 20th century. It was the Akali movement which gave birth to the Akali Dal and a religion based on politics of the Akalis. Since then, the Akalis have had exclusive control of the Sikh gurdwaras, internal dissensions and the Government's interference notwithstanding. Sikh scholars say the precedent of religion and politics being mixed together—the former serving the latter's interests—has been an asset for the Akalis. After their glorious fight for the liberation of the Sikh gurdwaras and shrines during the 1920's, the SGPC leadership launched successful agitations like the formation of the Punjabi speaking State, and anti-emergency Morcha in 1975-77, and currently for the restoration of the honour and glory of the Golden Temple as part of Panthic duty.

Political observers feel Akali unity is a matter of weeks or days away and would usher in a new era in Punjab. The united Akali leadership under Mr Mann would be able to have a fruitful dialogue with the Union Government. Sources say both Mr Chandra Shekhar and Choudhary Devi Lal are keen to win over the Sikhs by drawing them into a dialogue to resolve the inter-State issues on river waters, and territorial claims, which include transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab, that has embittered relations between Punjab and the Centre and also between Punjab and Haryana.

Militants' Reaction: But the hardcore militants must be watched. They are unlikely to digest Akali unity unless the party would demand a sovereign Sikh State. While Mr Badal and Mr Tohra have been threatened by the militants, Mr Mann has steadily towed their line and urged the Sikhs to give full support to the brave Sikh youth fighting for Sikh independence. The militants,

patronised by the panthic committee Dr Sohan Singh and Mr Zaffarwal and the militants hit squads of Mr Gurbachan Singh Manochahalk and others had been creating a fear psychosis by their killings. The desecration of Sikh gurdwaras lately has been used by the militants to kill Hindus to communalise the situation in Punjab.

There is a fear in Sikh circles that the declaration of Assam as a disturbed area and the calling out of the army there to meet the ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] challenge, might be re-enacted here in Punjab, where daily killings, kidnappings and robberies are at an all-time high.

The Chandra Shekhar Government is likely to unfold its Punjab policy in the coming days and the Government is thinking of releasing the detained Akali leaders soon.

West Bengal, Orissa Heading for Showdown on Baliapal Issue

91AS0316B Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
2 Dec 90 p 7

[Article by S. T. Beuria: "WB, Orissa Row Over Missile Test Range"]

[Text] Bhubaneswar, Dec. 5—A controversy seems to have cropped up in the political circles of both Orissa and the neighbouring West Bengal following Orissa Chief Minister Biju Patnaik's statement that the proposed National Test Range (NTR) at Baliapal in coastal Balasore District should be shifted to Sagar Island in West Bengal. Moreover, Mr Biju Patnaik's statement that his West Bengal counterpart, Mr Jyoti Basu has responded positively to his proposal regarding the shifting of NTR and Mr Basu's prompt denial of this, has fanned the controversy all the more. Now it seems, both the CPM [Marxist Communist Party] Government in West Bengal and the Janata Dal Government in Orissa are heading for a showdown on the issue.

It all started on December 3 last when Chief Minister Biju Patnaik at a press conference talking about the future of the proposed National Test Range (NTR) project at Baliapal, remarked that the project should be shifted to Sagar Island in West Bengal as it was "an uninhabited area."

Mr Patnaik reiterated his Government's decision against the location of the test range at Baliapal and said that if the defence authorities wanted to carry on missile testing, they were free to go ahead at the Interim Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur. But the National Test Range (NTR) should not be located anywhere in Orissa.

Trouble: However, trouble sparked off when Mr Patnaik, in his press conference, disclosed that he had made the proposal of shifting the NTR from Baliapal to Sagar Island to West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu during

their dinner talk at the Raj Bhavan at Puri on December 2 last and Mr Basu had reacted favourably to the proposal.

Mr Basu who was holidaying with his family at Puri promptly denied Mr Biju Patnaik's statement the very next day and said that he had "neither promised anything nor reacted favourably" to the Orissa Chief Minister's proposal. However, speaking to newsmen at Puri, Mr Basu reportedly admitted that in the course of his meeting with Mr Patnaik the subject did come up for discussion. "I do not know what exactly Mr Patnaik has said at his press conference at Bhubaneswar. After reading Mr Patnaik's reported statement in the local press, I had tried to contact Biju Babu, but he was not available. However, nothing has been finalised and I have promised nothing to Mr Patnaik," Mr Basu said.

Largest Delta: According to reports from Calcutta, Sagar Island is situated at the confluence of the Hooghly river and Bay of Bengal in the largest delta area in the world. It has a population of about 1.5 lakh, spread over 15 villages and is administered by eight gram panchayats. The island has a 32-km coastline. Besides, thousands of pilgrims from different parts of West Bengal visit the island once a year for a holy dip in the sea during maker sankranti and the Sagar mela. If the NTR was shifted to the island not only the 1.5 lakh local inhabitants would be affected but the Sagar mela and the annual holy ritual of the Bengali people would also be hampered. According to political observers, the popularity of the Left Front government in West Bengal has already taken a nosedive for various reasons and the Left Front leadership at this stage would not allow the shifting of NTR to Sagar Island, as it would definitely invite the people's wrath.

Little wonder, Mr Biju Patnaik's statement created a strong reaction in ruling Left Front circles in West Bengal. Already, Left Front Committee Chairman Mr Sailen Dasgupta, who is also the CPM West Bengal State Committee Secretary, has rejected Mr Patnaik's idea of setting up the NTR at Sagar Island. Mr Dasgupta has pointed out that like Baliapal, Sagar Island is also a thickly populated area, so the establishment of NTR in the island does not arise.

Controversy: Mr Dasgupta has also reportedly said that he had a telephonic talk with Chief Minister Jyoti Basu regarding the controversy and Mr Basu not only denied the statement made by Mr Biju Patnaik but informed that as there was no such proposal from the Centre to set up the proposed test range at Sagar islands, the question of agreeing or disagreeing did not arise.

Meanwhile, the residents of Baliapal have decided to continue their agitation against the proposed test range. They have been agitating against the project for the last six years as its implementation would result in their displacement from the agriculturally prosperous region.

However, the Centre's no clear cut decision regarding the shifting of NTR project from Baliapal has become an

embarrassment for the Janata Dal Government in Orissa as the Janata Dal won both the last Parliament and Assembly elections in the area on the assurance that the missile project would be shifted from there if the party was voted to power.

Now, with the Janata Dal (S) coming to power at the Centre and growing "unfriendly" relationship between the Janata Dal Government in Orissa and the Centre, the chances of the shift of NTR project from Baliapal has become more remote.

India, Bhutan Sign Protocol on Power Project

91AS0430A Calcutta: *THE STATESMAN* in English
26 Nov 90 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Nov. 25—India and Bhutan today signed a memorandum of understanding for the second and third phase of the Chukha hydel project in the Himalayan kingdom.

The detailed reports for both phases of the project will be prepared with Indian expertise at an estimated total cost of Rs [rupees] 10 crores. Once completed, the projects would make a major contribution to the welfare and economic development of the people of Bhutan. Surplus power generated by the projects would be "exported" to India.

Chukha hydel project is one of the biggest and the most prestigious projects undertaken abroad with India's assistance. It has been completed at a relatively low cost of Rs 247 crores. The project involves the construction of a dam to divert the waters of the Wangchu river in west-central Bhutan through a huge tunnel (inside the heart of a mountain) leading to a power house, built underground, too. More than 8,000 technicians and workers were engaged in this project.

The memorandum of understanding was signed by Mr L.L. Mehrotra, secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, and the Bhutanese Ambassador to India, Mr Dasho Karma Letho, in the presence of the King of Bhutan and the Indian Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar.

The Chukha project was opened in October 1988. Today, it is the most important source of revenue for the Government of Bhutan. From January, Bhutan's annual earnings from Chukha power projects are expected to be Rs 50 crores a year.

The second and third phase of the Chukha project is a run-of-the river scheme and is expected to have an installed capacity of 1,000 MW. The estimated cost of the project is about Rs 800 crores. The Wangchu reservoir scheme involves the construction of a rock-filled dam and is estimated to have an installed capacity of 500 MW to 600 MW.

India-Bhutan economic relations are very close. India apart from exporting almost all the consumer items,

industrial equipment and engineering goods also provides essential raw material like steel, fertilizers, coal and minerals to Bhutan.

Bhutan supplies to India, apart from power, cement, potatoes, timber, oranges and other fruits.

Troubles in Indo-Pakistan Diplomatic Relations

Pakistanis In Delhi

91AS0409A Madras THE HINDU in English
1 Dec 90 p 1

[Text] The Pakistan High Commission today alleged that five of its diplomatic officers were subjected to "dangerously close car chase, obstruction and indecent and vulgar treatment on Thursday and again today by Indian plainclothesmen in an obvious and concerted move to harass, provoke and intimidate them and disrupt the normal functioning of the High Commission."

In a statement, the High Commission's spokesman said as the diplomats left their office on Thursday, their cars were preceded and followed closely by Indian cars with up to eight persons "obstructing their movement and exposing them to danger." The Indian personnel stopped and abused them on the way. After the Pakistani diplomatic reached their residences, the Indians "hurled threats, insults and foul abuses" at the Pakistanis and their families. Throughout the night, the residence telephones of the Pakistani diplomats remained disconnected, the spokesman alleged.

The spokesman claimed that the High Commission brought the incidents to the notice of the External Affairs Ministry on Thursday night. Today, the details of the incident and the numbers of the Indian cars were provided to the ministry.

Regrettably, the pattern of "unlawful and contemptible conduct" continued today, the spokesman stated.

It is understood the local police have been told of a "fracas" this evening outside the residence of the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission in Green Park, South Delhi.

The Indian High Commission in Islamabad had earlier this week protested to the Pakistan Government against several incidents of harassment of diplomatic and non-diplomatic staff.

Episodes In Islamabad

91AS0409B Madras THE HINDU in English
3 Dec 90 p 7

[Article by K. K. Katyal]

[Text] New Delhi, 2 December—It is high time to put an end to the madness about the treatment by India and Pakistan of their diplomats and other employees in each

other's capitals. It started with Islamabad last week, and now New Delhi seems to be reciprocating, mercifully on a smaller scale.

Those of us who were at Male and heard the first-hand accounts of the warm and perhaps constructive discussions of the two prime ministers, Mr Chandra Shekhar and Mr Nawaz Sharif, were disgusted on return here to know of the shameful episode in Islamabad. The way it found the echo in Delhi was not creditable either.

Such things happen at lower levels—as a result of over-enthusiasm by junior functionaries, but there recurrence does no credit to the seniors of the host governments. That a sub-inspector or slightly senior official should be able to undermine what is sought to be achieved by seasoned diplomats through painstaking efforts is a matter of concern. It is more so in the case of India and Pakistan which have enough tension in the bilateral field otherwise.

Islamabad bigger culprit: Islamabad is the bigger culprit. This writer knows from his personal experience how journalists on professional rounds were shadowed, how the Pakistani citizens receiving them used to be interrogated. The lot of the Indian High Commission staff residing in Islamabad is all the more unenviable. Phone-tapping, shadowing of their callers and subjecting them to nagging inquiries, are no rare instances. Some time ago, the house of a "Hindu Secretary" (he was a Counsellor, in fact), used to be watched by plainclothes persons perched on trees outside.

Pakistani diplomats and employees here too may have their tales of woe, but New Delhi is comparatively a more open capital. The authorities here need to guard this reputation.

Following protests by India, the Pakistani side assured inquiries in the recent cases—of the wife of an High Commission staff member having been taken away for interrogation, harassed and made to sign a statement she never made, or of the school bag and lunch box of the 4-year-old daughter of a consulate employee at Karachi having been searched in the school premises. The matter needs to be pursued with Islamabad or with the High Commission here vigorously—and efforts made to unmask the guilty employees of whatever shadowy agency they belong to. Any other course will be counter-productive.

Sri Lanka Said to Prefer to Establish Trade Talks With India

91AS0408B Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
28 Dec 90 p 12

[Article by K.S. Dakshina Murthy. Words in boldface as published.]

[Text] New Delhi, 27 December—When a high-level Indian delegation led by External Affairs Minister V.C. Shukla visits Sri Lanka on Saturday, other than the usual

confabulations on the conflict in Jaffna there is a new item high on its agenda: to prop up flagging trade between the two countries.

Diplomatic sources say this is an attempt "to get on with the business of normalising relations."

If trade as an item of discussion figures in the agenda, the credit for it goes to Lankan Premier Ranasinghe Premadasa. For, as an official concedes, this has been the constant refrain of at least two Lankan delegations that have visited India during this year.

The suggestion to discuss trade also fits in neatly with Mr Premadasa's policy. In his scheme of things, the ethnic convulsions in Lanka are purely an internal matter of that country and to that extent India has no say in the matter other than the concerns it may merely express. More importantly, in Mr Premadasa's view, if a dialogue has to exist between the two countries it has to be in a non-controversial area like trade and economy.

Both the V.P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar governments, while conceding this stance in principle, have not been too happy over the Premadasa Government's studied indifference to certain guidelines that have formed part of India's present "good neighbourly" policy.

3 Points Ignored: There are precisely three points that the Lankan Government has seemingly ignored. For one, India questions how the ethnic strife in Lanka can be a purely internal affair if the former has to suffer refugees who have been continuously streaming into the country. Official figures say at least 122,000 refugees have come into Tamil Nadu during the period 26 August to 12 December this year, and the influx seems to be never-ending.

Secondly, in the cross-fire arising out of the offensive launched against the Tamil militants, a number of civilians have been hit. This, despite India's exhortations that it is the Lankan Government's responsibility to see it does not happen.

And, finally, while successive Indian Governments have been clear in their pronouncements that no third power should be allowed to interfere, Mr Premadasa has reportedly been entertaining Norway and Australia in his offensive against the Tamil militants.

In fact, when the former External Affairs Minister I.K. Gujral in the V.P. Singh Cabinet intended visiting Lanka to put forth India's unhappiness over these issues more forcefully, the Premadasa Government did not respond, and eventually the visit fell through.

In addition, there is a view outside Government that questions the efficacy of normalising relations in the context of a "bloody stalemate" that has characterised the armed conflict in the Jaffna peninsula.

India has also been handicapped in recent times by the absence of a strong ruling party and to that extent its

pronouncements have not had the desired effect, says a professor of Sri Lankan studies at the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

In terms of leverage over Mr Premadasa's policies, India is therefore at a disadvantage. Echoing a section of the intelligentsia, Dr Muni says with the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force [IPKF] without any preconditions the erstwhile V.P. Singh Government gave in to Mr Premadasa and his rapidly anti-Indian brand of nationalism.

Leverage: Leverage has played an important role as a matter of course in defining the relations between the two countries so far. In the early 80s, the Indira Gandhi Government used a two-pronged strategy which on the one hand alerted international forums including the United Nations to the atrocities being committed on Lankan Tamils while on the other actively encouraging militants in this country.

Later, as part of the Rajiv-Jayawardene accord, the Indian army was sent to Lanka's north with the aim of helping that country chalk out a form of autonomy by forming provincial councils in the north and the east.

Unforeseen obstacles emerged and the accord went awry, and with it, India's leverage.

The period following the IPKF return to India is seen as a period of reflection when no high-level delegation went to Lanka and no directives were issued at any level.

Given this context, officials say the present delegation is an attempt by the Chandra Shekhar Government to "help" Mr Premadas see the "futility in prolonging the conflict that has only resulted in bloodshed."

India's latest stand is therefore being termed as a "positive leverage" in that there is an active move to strengthen bilateral ties in the sphere of business even while "talking" about the conflict.

The Shukla team is therefore responding to a Mr Premadasa suggestion to reactivate the Indo-Lanka Joint Economic Commission that has met only four times in 22 years since its inception. With proposed meetings under the commission at least every alternate year and joint projects thereof, officials express hopes of a fresh beginning.

Foreign Investments: Substantial Dip Reported in 1990

91AS0408A Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
24 Dec 90 p 14

[Text] New Delhi, 23 December (UNI)—There has been a substantial fall in foreign investments in India in 1990 as compared to the previous year.

Foreign investment which was Rs [rupees] 316.67 crore in 1989, was only Rs 112.23 crore during the first nine months of 1990. The figures, which have been compiled

by the Indian Investment Centre, show that the decline in investments are from countries which are major partners of India, which include Japan, the United States and Germany.

The most substantial decline is in the case of Japanese investments. As compared to an investment of Rs 8.78 crore in 1989, the investment in the first nine months of 1990 was only Rs 1,861 crore. The total Japanese investment so far in the country is Rs 103.5 crore. Investment in the case of Japan is not likely to increase either in the remaining period of 1990, according to experts.

There is fast track clearance for Japanese investments. But the fall in investment is despite this, the experts pointed out.

The terms of projects also there is a substantial decline from Japan. There were 62 foreign collaboration from Japan in 1989. There were only 34 collaborations in the first nine months of 1990. Six of these were technical-cum-financial collaborations.

In the case of United States, investment fell from Rs 62.12 crore in 1989 to Rs 32.42 crore in the first nine months of 1990. The total investment so far from the U.S. is Rs 318.4 crore.

While there were 107 collaborations from the United States in the first nine months of 1990 there were 127 collaborations in 1989. The number of technical-cum-financial collaborations was 37 in the first nine months of 1990.

In the case of Federal Republic of Germany investment fell from Rs 120.33 crore to Rs 14.08 crore in the first nine months of 1990. (The figures for erstwhile German Democratic Republic was compiled separately.) The total investment from FRG Rs 218.46 crore. The number of collaborations approved in his case was 106 as compared to 112 in 1989. The number of technical-cum-financial collaborations were 33 in the first nine months of 1990.

In the case of the United Kingdom investment fell from Rs 3.46 crore in 1989 to Rs 5.06 crore in the first nine months of 1990. The total investment from the United States is Rs 85.57 crore.

The total number of UK collaborations approved in 1990 was 83 as compared to 66 in 1989.

The experts said an interesting feature was that investment from some smaller countries showed an increase during the period. These include Italy, France, Switzerland, South Korea and the Netherlands.

Besides, the Soviet Union has substantially increased its investment in India during the last two years.

Soviet investment which was Rs 0.3 crore in 1987 and Rs 0.44 crore in 1988, jumped to Rs 9.6 crore in 1989 and Rs 6.71 crore in the first nine months of 1990.

There was a sharp fall in non-resident [NRI] Indian investment during the first nine months of 1990. The investment which stood at Rs 21.12 crore in 1989 was Rs 5.25 crore in the first nine months of 1990. The total investment from NRI's is Rs 123.23 crore.

The experts said that there were several reasons for the fall in foreign investment in the first nine months of 1990. The industrial policy announced by V.P. Singh's Government created considerable interest among foreign investors. This was, however, not implemented. The removal of procedural aspects evoked considerable enthusiasm among investors. There has, however, been uncertainty since then. The tendency among the major investors is to "wait for things to become clear."

The precarious foreign exchange position has also acted as a deterrent, the experts said.

Political turmoil and violence too has affected the investment climate. Foreign investors perceive the situation as lacking in political stability.

V.P. Singh Said To Be a Favorite of Muslims

91AS0326A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 14 Nov 90 p 5

[News Analysis by Rajdeep Sardesai]

[Text] Bombay, 13 Nov—Mr V.P. Singh may no longer be the Prime Minister of the country. His halo of being a principled politician may have lost its lustre. But for the overwhelming majority of the Muslim community, he remains the one national leader who spontaneously evokes affection and admiration.

Indeed, judging by the reactions of a cross-section of Muslims in the city, Mr Singh's ouster only seems to have strengthened his support among the community. He is almost universally perceived as a martyr who has sacrificed his position for the larger cause of secularism.

Though there has been growing evidence in recent weeks to suggest that Mr Singh was hunting with the communal hound even as he professed to run with the secular hare, this appears to have made no difference to his popularity. "These are all false rumours," said Abdul Rehman, who works in a cloth shop.

Responses to his losing the prime ministership vary from an aggressive, "This is a big zulm (crime) committed," to a more subdued, "This was only to be expected in politics."

But underlying almost every reaction is a wave of sympathy for the man. Why?

The most obvious reason is that at a juncture, when the average Muslim finds himself increasingly insecure and isolated, Mr Singh's determination to protect the Babri Masjid and the law of the land has touched a chord. Said

Mr Warif Jamal Kadri, a local religious leader, "V.P. Singh was the only leader to back his words with positive action."

No one is quite able to explain the exact nature of Mr Singh's "positive action." But the Muslim self-perception of their plight is captured in the imagery of a mithaiwala who said, "Muslims today are like birds trapped in a cage. All we need is a few grains to be thrown at us. V.P. Singh at least did that."

It is not just the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid issue that seems to have helped Mr Singh remain firmly embedded in the Muslim mind. Interestingly, many Muslims justify their support for Mr Singh "because he was ready to implement Mandal."

Implementation of the Mandal commission report is not seen as just symbolising a commitment to OBCs [official backward classes] in particular, but to providing social justice to all disadvantaged groups in general. Said Mr Mohammad Riaz, a tea-stall owner, "Scheduled castes and Muslims are the most backward communities in this country."

It is remarkable to find the contrasting emotions that Mr Singh and the Congress leader, Mr Rajiv Gandhi evoke among the average Muslim. Despite the Sadbhavana yatra, Mr Gandhi is still viewed as the leader who played a dangerous double-game on the shilanyas issue last year, just before the general elections. Any question on why Muslims have turned anti-Congress is often met with the response. "After the Bhagalpur riots last year, how can we think of supporting the Congress?"

Now, the Muslims hold Mr Gandhi and the Congress responsible for the ouster of Mr V.P. Singh. There is a feeling that their interests have once again been betrayed by the Congress. "Why could the Congress not respect last year's electoral verdict? Why do they still want power?" questioned an irate Mr Mukhtar Ahmed, who runs a spare parts shop.

The Prime Minister, Mr Chandra Shekhar, is viewed with similar suspicion because of his role in Mr Singh's removal. But at the same time, many Muslims are willing to give him a chance. They want to reserve judgement till he provides evidence of his affection for the minorities. The businessmen in particular want the new Prime Minister to bring stability in the country above all else.

The only leader who can rival Mr Singh's stature among the Muslim community is the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav. Indeed, on the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid issue, Mr Yadav evokes the stronger and more positive reactions. He is seen to be the "tough, little man, who leads from the front."

His visit to the city last month, when he led a huge procession through the Muslim-dominated areas and launched a frontal attack on the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]-Shiv Sena alliance has increased public identification with a leader who until then was barely known.

Two weeks ago, when a morcha to protest against kar sevaks entering the Babri Masjid sanctum was held, life-size posters of Mr V.P. Singh and Mr Yadav were seen everywhere.

The recent split between the two leaders is not expected to affect their popular image as secular leaders. However, Mr Yadav's support in the Muslim community may be adversely affected if he is seen to ally with the Congress to ensure his political survival in Uttar Pradesh. Muslim leaders owing allegiance to the Janata Dal confess that a division of votes is inevitable after the parting of ways between the two much-admired leaders.

Indeed, elections are a completely different ball game. The ex-Congress MLA, Mr Amin Knanwani, pointed out that even in the last general elections the Congress performed well in Muslim-dominated areas of the city. Mr Murli Deora, for example, led by more than 17,000 votes in the Umerkhadi segment of the Bombay south constituency. Another Congress candidate, Mr D.T. Rupawate, went ahead by 9,000 votes in the Nagpada segment of the Bombay south-central constituency.

Such results are seen to be more a reflection on the weakness of the Janata Dal candidates rather than evidence of any positive support for the Congress. Observers believe that the fear of allowing a BJP-Shiv Sena candidate to win the election through the backdoor prompted many Muslims to vote for the person who was in the best position to defeat the alliance, irrespective of party affiliations.

But 11 months is a long time in politics. Now it is no longer anti-Congressism or anti-Sena sentiments that are ruling the Muslim psyche. Instead, there is a visible pro-V.P. Singh feeling. As S.S. Abdullah, a restaurant owner put it, "Just wait till the next election and we will express our gratitude to Mr Singh."

For a former Prime Minister, contemplating life without power, these words may bring warm comfort.

HINDU Analyst Writes on Foreign Affairs Tasks

New Government's Pattern

91AS0402A Madras THE HINDU in English
8 Dec 90 p 9

[Article by K.K. Katyal]

[Text] New Delhi, 7 December—A new, somewhat diffused, pattern is discernible in the handling of foreign policy—after the change of Government at the Centre. Apart from the normal channels of the External Affairs Ministry, the Commerce Minister, Dr Subramaniam Swamy, has been involved in crucial moves. At the same time, the Congress(I) has sought to project itself demonstratively in foreign affairs. Though nonofficial in character, its activities are seen as carrying weight, considering that the party is the main force behind the Government.

The new External Affairs Minister, Mr V.C. Shukla, has yet to settle down in his office. He had to leave for Male for the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] conference—straight from the oath-taking ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan. A week after his return here, he went to New York for the U.N. General Assembly session. Among the priority items on his agenda—after he gets back—will be the preparations for visits to Sri Lanka and China (the planned trips of his predecessor, Mr I.K. Gujral, had to be called off because of the political developments here).

The schedule of Mr Shukla's trip to Beijing will determine the timing of the Chinese Prime Minister, Mr Li Peng's visit to India. He was to come here around this time, but his plans had to be revised—again because of political changes in India. From 1 January, India will take over as a member of the U.N. Security Council—and this will mean increase in the frequency of Mr Shukla's visit to New York, especially because the tempo of developments relating to the Gulf is bound to accelerate just then.

Dr Swamy utilised his first visit abroad, as Union Minister—to Brussels for the GATT meeting—for significant contacts. His first stopover was Tunis, where he met Mr Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, obviously to dispel doubts about the new Government's solidarity with the cause of the Palestinians. Dr Swamy was known in the past for his sympathy for the Israeli stand and there was, thus, an element of deliberation in deputing him for talks with Mr Arafat. At Brussels, Dr Swamy appears to have met an Israeli dignitary perhaps a minister. He, too, contemplated a visit to China, apart from some other countries. Libya and the UAE [United Arab Emirates] are part of his itinerary during the current trip abroad.

The Congress(I)'s enhanced interest in foreign affairs was evident from its moves, relating to the Gulf. It sent Mr Romesh Bhandari, former Foreign Secretary, who later became convener of the AICC(I) [All India Congress Committee (I)] cell on foreign affairs, to Baghdad. Mr Bhandari called on the Iraqi President, Mr Saddam Husayn, and may again go there for another meeting.

Simultaneously, the former Nicaraguan President, Mr Daniel Ortega, was here in the last week of November, at the invitation of the Congress(I) president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and is due back again. Mr Ortega, like other good-intentioned prominent world leaders—the former West German Chancellor, Mr Willy Brandt, among them—had been contributing his individual bit to the mediatory efforts on the Gulf. Mr Ortega, too, had called on Mr Saddam Husayn in Baghdad.

At a time, when the Security Council was actively involved in the resolution of the Gulf crisis, and the U.S. President, Mr George Bush, proposed direct contacts between his Administration and the present Iraqi regime, the mediatory efforts of other individuals, have a marginal value. What is important in the Indian

context, however, is the initiative taken by the Congress(I) in inviting him here and thus, seeking to associate itself with a role on the Gulf—and projecting itself in the conduct of foreign affairs.

Objectives Discussed

91AS0402B Madras *THE HINDU* in English
10 Dec 90 p 8

[Article by K.K. Katyal]

[Text] As tough as the domestic agenda (outlined in these columns last week) are the foreign policy challenges facing the Chandra Shekhar Government. Because of the narrow base on which it rests there is a widespread perception that it is an interim set-up. To drive home the point that it is not so, the new rulers will need to impart vigour and dynamism in the conduct of external relations. Not an easy task but for the most part, it could be performed by continuing—and updating—the policy lines adopted by their immediate predecessors.

As regards neighbours in particular, there is a case for pursuing the initiatives of the last one year rather than switching back to the frozen stances of the Congress(I) Government.

The previous government began with a full-scale thrust on neighbourhood diplomacy—and for good reasons. Think of the situation when it took over. The problem with Sri Lanka, created by the last phase of the Indian Peace Keeping Force's [IPKF] presence in the Island, the sudden escalation in the ties with Pakistan and residual sourness with Nepal—all had created strong compulsions to concentrate on the immediate vicinity, in the first instance. Later, it turned to the pressing global developments—belatedly, some thought—but before its moves could make a headway, there was a change of guard in New Delhi.

Perceptions Change

In the domestic field, the stock of the new Government will be subjected to rapid fluctuations, caused by momentary impulses. A false step may bring it crashing down while a sensible move could push it up dramatically. Not so in external relations—here, perceptions change but slowly. The image of the new set-up as an interim, stop-gap arrangement would not be rubbed off easily and the hesitations of others in dealing with India on a long-term basis, both in the diplomatic and economic fields, may take time to subside. New Delhi may already be aware of this chill and its consequences. In the past, there used to be a virtual scramble in world capitals to play host to Indian Government leaders, and keenness to pay visits to New Delhi. It is a different story now. Some foreign dignitaries have revised the schedule of their visits here while others prefer to wait. It, certainly, is not an enviable situation.

The biggest task for the new Government is to see that the present image is rubbed off and the relevance of

India is re-established in the eyes of others. That India, one of the biggest democracies in the world, a shining example in the working of a representative, participative system should have fallen to this lot is ironic indeed. This at a time when Pakistan, after decades of military dictatorship, has managed to consolidate its polity through a democratic process which did not lack credibility despite its inadequacies.

The foreign policy agenda is, thus, cut out—apart from the question of image, the Government will need to turn immediate attention to the consequences of the Gulf crisis—whether or not it leads to a conflagration—the security environment in the region and the problems with individual neighbours. If the reports of Pakistan going ahead with the nuclear bomb pose one type of challenge, the confused changes in the Soviet Union and their economic and political fall-out add up to another.

Positive Developments

At the same time, there are some positive developments—to cite one example, consolidation of the ties with China. The military officials of India and China recently held two meetings, one each in the eastern and western sectors—in the first contact of its type—to evolve norms for maintaining peace and tranquility along the border. This was a significant advance in the processes envisaged by the Joint Working Group [JWG] for the border, set up during the former Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Beijing in December 1988. The meetings, one on 21 November and the other on 26 November, were, as intended, confined to devising means to guard against disturbance of peace and not concerned with wider issues, arising from the boundary dispute. The lowered tensions on the Chinese border meant a qualitative change—already New Delhi found it possible to move some of its troops from these sectors to Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

At the second meeting of the JWG—in New Delhi—India sought to take the discussion on the substantive boundary problem from abstractions to concrete proposals. It defined the "limits of flexibility" for each side, relating these to the two sectors. There were such specific ideas as the need to avoid unsettling settled populations as a result of a fresh delineation. The Chinese have yet to come out with their considered response. This is one of the areas where follow-up action by the new Government does not brook delay.

The Gulf crisis enters another crucial phase, as the 15 January 1991 deadline, set by the U.N. Security Council for the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, draws near, and plans for direct contacts between the U.S. and Iraq, at the foreign ministers level, are firmed up. New Delhi has to be prepared for the consequences of both war and peace. The evacuation of over 1.50 lakh Indians from Kuwait, and the cost it entailed, the virtual stoppage of the remittances from Kuwait and Iraq, the disruption of oil imports from the area and the burden cast by the unprecedented hike in the oil prices in the international

market represent some of the dimensions of the Gulf crisis for New Delhi. These issues and the security problems, both direct and indirect, are the major concerns of India, calling for a high degree of concentration on remedial measures and moves.

Just when pragmatism is the need of the hour, the Congress(I), the main force behind the Government, has plumped for the dramatic. A former foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandari, who, after retirement, was the convener of the AICC(I)'s [All India Congress Committee (I)] cell on foreign affairs, had been canvassing both in New Delhi and Baghdad what amounts to a plan for near-total pull-out by the Iraqis from Kuwait. He had been talking euphorically of it, projecting it as a sure panacea for the Gulf ills, and has undertaken a second visit to Iraq. This is essentially a Congress(I) move and the Government has yet to outline its attitude. It marks the Congress(I)'s bid to project itself on the international scene after the change of Government. The Congress(I)'s invitation to the former Nicaraguan President, Mr Daniel Ortega, who along with other well-intentioned world leaders sought to do their bit to defuse the Gulf tension also falls in this category. One of the loosely-mooted ideas envisaged the putting together of an Eminent Persons Group, including Mr Rajiv Gandhi and the former West German Chancellor, Mr Willy Brandt, for mediatory moves.

Counter Productive

There is a strong case for the new Government to build upon the policies of the recent past to maintain continuity rather than force a break. This is particularly necessary in the case of neighbours, be it Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan or Bangladesh. As regards Sri Lanka the decision to bring back the IPKF by a set date marked a departure from the ambiguity of the previous Government and a desire to do business with Colombo through the normal instruments of diplomacy rather than through leverages (which, in any case, had ceased to be effective and created fresh problems). The new policy did not solve the problem in its entirety and the refugees began to pour in as the Sri Lankan forces stepped up pressure against the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. But this was part of the objective reality from which there could not be a total escape. In any case, the earlier line had landed New Delhi in avoidable contradictions and, to that extent, turned out to be counter-productive.

On decisions on Pakistan, three strands could be discerned—one, deployment of sufficient force on the border to convey a message to the other side that the price of any adventure would be high; two, a bid to resume normal relations in the long-term interest of the two countries (and also to send signals to militants in India that they could not count upon perpetual India-Pakistan antagonism); and three, confidence building measures, following the two rounds of talks by the Foreign Secretaries. This was how the Indian side presented its case to Pakistan—"you chose not to observe

the normal norms of Inter-State relations and, therefore, things went wrong. This policy needs to be reversed in the interest of normal ties." As a way out of the impasse, created by the restated positions of the two sides, it was suggested to Pakistan to take some symbolic measures, in keeping with its own professions.

An Ideal Base

Of the three options available on Nepal, India chose the straightforward one—offering to play its part in restoring the old special relationship, suggesting reciprocal steps to the other side. In the process, New Delhi disfavoured suggestions for ad hoc or partial approaches. Mr Chandra Shekhar, who had long been involved in India-Nepalese affairs, is certain to find it an ideal base to build upon.

As regards Bangladesh, a lot of unpublicised effort had gone into moves to dispel irritants—with the result that the two sides came very close to an agreement on the river water issue. The thread has now been broken because of the developments in Bangladesh and could only be picked after a while.

The last 11 months marked a major shift in India's relations with the U.S., with the decision not to view each other through the cold war prism and not to let the distorted images, projected by it, be the basis for crucial assumptions. This did not mean an identity of perceptions on issues like nuclear disarmament (India wanted nuclear weapons to be eliminated while the U.S. was for reduction), world order (India favoured a universal pattern while Washington counted on the hegemonistic role of the developed nations), but they found it possible to work out specific measures for cooperation, based on the belief that their interests are not antagonistic. To pursue this line will, undoubtedly, be no easy task. A bigger challenge awaits the new Government while sorting out the relationship with the Soviet Union. The beleaguered Soviet leadership which had agreed, a few months ago, to institutionalised arrangements to maintain special ties with India will find it hard to stick to its commitments. The volume of the Indo-Soviet trade is shrinking, the credits and favourable terms once available to India will be a thing of the past, the arrangement to maintain rupee trade till 1995 is in jeopardy and the move to work out a new rupee-ruble rate has run into snags.

Panthic Panel Presents Code for Journalists

91AS0428A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 24 Nov 90 p 11

[Text] Chandigarh, Nov. 23. The five-member Panthic Committee, headed by Dr Sohan Singh, has created ripples in the journalistic fraternity in the state by prescribing a detailed code of conduct for them.

The panthic committee has issued a categorical warning that any deviation from or violation of the code would result in the death of the person concerned.

The code of conduct devised by the committee comes close on the heels of a recent offensive launched by the militants to browbeat the press into submission. The process had begun in July when The Tribune Group of newspapers and some others were forced to publish the full text of a 21-page letter written by Mr Harjinder Singh Jinda and Mr Sukhdev Singh Sukha, the two militants convicted for murdering General A.S. Vaidya.

Recently, THE TRIBUNE was forced to carrying in unabridged form a lengthy rebuttal to an article written by Captain Amarinder Singh, a senior Akali Dal (Badal) leader. The rebuttal was carried on the regular news columns rather than in the "Letter to the Editor" column.

The six-page press note in Gurmukhi was sent by post to newsmen to their residences or offices and was accompanied by footnotes addressed by name to journalists concerned. It warned them to make a noting of these guidelines, which come into effect from December 1, and to publish their press note unabridged.

The press note issued in the name of Dr Sohan Singh, Mr Wadhwa Singh Babbar, Mr Harminder Singh Sultanwind, Mr Mahal Singh Babbar and Mr Satinder Singh does not mince words when it warns that should "any of those reporting from the land of Khalistan violate this code, they would be punished." The press release also states that they were able to evolve guidelines for the code of conduct after studying about 500 reports and comments published on the Khalistan struggle in the last ten years.

Spelling out the code of conduct for journalists, the committee warns against describing all those struggling for the establishment of Khalistan as terrorists, extremists or even alleged terrorists. "Instead, they must be termed militants," it says.

The Panthic Committee goes on to note that the former editor of THE TRIBUNE, Mr Prem Bhatia, had coined the word "terrorist" to defame the militants engaged in their freedom struggle. It also took a serious note of the front-page editorial written by Mr Bhatia in THE TRIBUNE which had supported Operation Bluestar. "He has been warned," the statement added.

Newspapers have been told to desist from their practice of addressing the militants as self-styled, so-called or have his rank stated in inverted commas. The press note instead has instructed them to either prefix the militant's name with his rank or with "Mr."

Specifically mentioning THE HINDUSTAN TIMES, THE TIMES OF INDIA, HIND SAMACHAR, NAWA ZAMANA, LOK LEHAR and some other papers, the Panthic Committee has noted that these newspapers do not prefix the name of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale with Sant. "They should desist from this practice or suffer the consequences. If till now no harm has befallen them, their reporters still run the risk," it warned.

It also asked newspapers not to address the Panthic Committee as "Pakistani-based." The news agencies, PTI and UNI, have been told to use the word militant while noting that should any newspaper use the term terrorist instead, the news agency concerned would have to withdraw its services from these papers. Significantly, it says that these agencies should give them more coverage.

It has warned newspapers and journalists to stop indulging in sensational stories, saying that such practices had been a "Brahminical tradition. Some newspapers carry plants to suit their political lines and thereby violate the high ethical traditions of journalism," it said.

"Please remember, we are watching everything and shall spare no one," the statement warned adding: "We expect dispassionate and objective reporting based on an honest approach and not on conjecture. Be vigilant." The committee has also said that reporters basing their stories on intelligence reports should identify these sources and not publish planted stories. These sources should be quoted for the benefit of the Khalistani forces, it said.

The Panthic Committee has asked journalists not to be resentful when they debate this code of conduct. "We have noticed over the past ten years that most journalists do not love the Khalistani land. Rather they are busy making money and praising the government. Instead, they should report honestly and bravely and accept the creation of Khalistan. Ours is a full-scale war and the reporters are on the frontline writing about it," the press release states. It adds, significantly: "The journalists can very well be sent to Delhi like the ones sent out from Srinagar."

In a special address to Sikh journalists, the Panthic Committee has said that any Sikh journalist who might be feeling stifled in his organizations should report to them. But "do not make false complaints," it has added.

Editorial Views Costly Mistakes Connected to Airbus Crash

91AS0408C Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English
31 Dec 90 p 8

[Text] Although the report of the Justice K. Shivasankar Bhat Commission, which inquired into the 14 February Airbus A-320 crash at Bangalore, has not been made public, uncontradicted media reports about the commission's findings put the cause of the accident down to pilot error. The crash, according to these reports, occurred because there was a mismatch in maintaining speed and height, the aircraft being allowed to descend below the minimum height and being on idle descent rather than speed mode. Some indication that the commission had not, in any case, put the blame on the high-technology fly-by-wire aircraft was available when domestic A-320 flights were resumed by Indian Airlines [IA] early this month, around the time of the submission of Justice Bhat's report. Earlier, IA had resumed regular A-320 flights on international routes,

following the aircraft's yeoman service rendered during Operation Airlift during which about 140,000 Indians were brought back from Kuwait and Iraq.

Although the Bhat Commission went into the limited question of the cause of the Bangalore air crash, wide-ranging speculation in the wake of the accident had in a sense prejudiced not only this issue but also several larger questions in the public mind. One, that of the airworthiness of the A-320, has already been more or less satisfactorily settled with the Gulf airlift and subsequent resumption of regular flights. Well before the Bhat Commission's hearings were completed, the Air Marshal S.S. Ramdas Committee, which looked into one of the larger questions, the technical preparedness of IA for the Airbus A-320 induction, had found several shortcomings, including some in the training of pilots and engineers. With Air Marshal Ramdas now, ironically, at the helm of IA, the reinduction of the aircraft appears to be proceeding at an unhurried pace to avoid the mistakes he had put his finger on. Only seven of the 18 aircraft are back in service.

Hindsight shows that the grounding of the aircraft ordered on 19 February by the then Minister for Civil Aviation, Mr Arif Mohammed Khan, was, if not a panic reaction, at least an unfortunately categorical action that fed suspicion and delayed the phased reinduction of A-320s now going on. An inquiry into the grounding, which has cost IA a lot of money in idle capital, has already been threatened by the present Civil Aviation Minister, Mr Harmohan Dhawan, and is now being demanded by Congress(I) MPs [Members of Parliament]. It might prove to be as pointless as the previous government's investigation of the Airbus A-320 deal.

NEPAL

Prime Minister Bhattarai Interviewed

91AS0413A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English
30 Nov 90 p 6

[Nepalese Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai spoke to Bhola Chatterji; first paragraph is THE TELEGRAPH introduction; italicized words as published]

[Text] The entire country is backward, no one is more backward than anyone else. The entire country is underdeveloped and therefore, socialism is the best panacea, freedom is the best panacea on the political side and equal opportunity is the best panacea for economic betterment.

Q: How is the Nepali Congress' internal politics shaping up?

A: The Nepali Congress is a very big party, as you know. And it has right from the very start about 43 or 44 years ago, given its members complete freedom. Personally, as a citizen and as president of the Nepali Congress I believe in what Dr Rammanohar Lohia had said and

perhaps also written somewhere. Many years ago, in Calcutta, he said that an ideal politician or a statesman for that matter or a party organiser or a party leader would be one whose mind should be anarchic but whose work should be methodical. Only a man like Lohia could say this and also act accordingly. So I have given all freedom of thought and speech to our party members. But when the party decides certain issues and vital issues at that, they are bound to support it, they must support it, if they do not support they can leave the party. Therefore, looking from outside, it may appear that there is complete anarchy in the Nepali Congress, but actually it is a very, very well-organised party, a dedicated party and full of committed cadres.

Q: Is the triumvirate comprising Mr Ganesh Man Singh, Mr Girija Prasad Koirala and yourself basically in agreement with the government's policy?

A: Yes, completely, completely, because it is an interim government and we don't want to totally disturb the old ways of the government. But then we intervene wherever it is necessary. On vital matters we are in complete agreement.

Q: My understanding of the United Left Front, which is a party to the Nepali Congress government, is that it is all for eating the cake and having it too—it is sharing power with you and at the same time opposing the government from outside. Would you agree if I say that the United Left Front is the proverbial albatross round your neck?

A: Not exactly like that. But then because of their inexperience in politics, in life, because they have no experience of overground work of party and all through they have been working underground, therefore these things do happen. There is a natural desire to eat the cake and have it too with everybody. You see, that is what they had done earlier—they were playing both the role of opposition and also government members. But now they are coming round to our views and they have certain responsibilities which have made them more dependent on and more cooperative with us.

Q: Do you propose to face the general election, scheduled to be held in April or May 1991, in cooperation with the United Left Front?

A: Well, as you know, every political party works for its own aims and objectives. Why does it contest election—it contests election to get an absolute majority for itself in Parliament. That is our desire also. But then they are in the government and we were together in the movement. Of course, as you know it, the movement was launched by us and they supported it. As a result, they have joined the government. Some kind of an arrangement in the election will depend on what they propose to do.

Q: What is your attitude towards the former partyless panchayat adherents who have now established two separate political parties, namely the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party and the National Democratic Party?

A: Our minds are open, but we know however they might shout, however they might organise, people are fed up with them. They are not going to win the coming election. Well, now that we have a multi-party system for which we fought, they have also every right to stay in the country and work for the good of their parties and also work for the victory of their parties in the election. We don't have any prejudice, we would very much like that they join the mainstream and be helpful in nation-building activities.

Q: The nation's economy apparently is in bad shape and the law and order situation seemingly does not inspire much confidence. What do you have to say to that?

A: That was the situation before, now it has changed, Bhola. Why it has changed?—because we have taken certain steps, we have transferred a lot of police officers, a lot of district officers just like your district magistrates in India. We have transferred them, we have brought them back here and we have sent new officers in their place. And after the promulgation of the new Constitution, we will be in a position to approach the law and order problem with strictness and we will be very strict about the law and order situation. Unless law and order improves, unless there is complete peace in the country, we shall not be able to win the election, people will not go to the polls if there is confusion and chaos in the country. Therefore, it is very, very essential that law and order prevails and we are coming down heavily on those who are rowdies, goondas and this type of people.

Q: What are your policy priorities now and what would be your policy priorities, economic and political, if you get back to power?

A: After the political change, after a multi-party system has been introduced, after the monarchy has become constitutional and the promulgation of the Constitution, what indeed should be the priorities, economic and political. As you know, we have worked together in India as socialists. The Nepali Congress is a social democratic party which you know very well. We have found after so many years of struggle for social democracy that it means freedom of the people, democracy and equal opportunity for all. In the election manifesto, you will see our pledge will be to give equal opportunity to everybody. That is why we don't have any problem of reservation. There were some people who wanted reservation, but we said, no, we don't want to copy India and no reservation. The entire country is backward, no one is more backward than anyone else. The entire country is underdeveloped and therefore, socialism is the best panacea, freedom is the best panacea on the political side and equal opportunity is the best panacea for economic betterment.

Q: Are you in agreement with the international policy framework that had been devised during the partyless panchayat rule? If not, why?

A: During the partyless panchayat rule they had a planned sort of thing and our main difference was only on one issue—they were playing too much the China

card against India. And we said that we must be on the alert, we must not hurt India which is too near, too dear to us and with whom we have certain binding social relationship, political relationship and also cultural relationship.

Therefore, when I went there last June on the invitation of the then Prime Minister, Mr V.P. Singh, things started changing. They became brighter and brighter. I found such a great response, it was actually the greatness of the Indian people and not my success, that it completely restored confidence in the hearts of the common Indians and all the suspicion that was there in the foreign office of India vanished. But then one point also entered and it was that Mr V.P. Singh told me, "We are ourselves trying to enter into negotiations with the Chinese and we are bent upon bettering our relations with the Chinese. So you must also have good relations with the Chinese."

Q: Do you agree that Nepal's new constitution, proclaimed on 9 November 1990, reflects the successful completion of the line of 'National reconciliation' that Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala propounded after his return to Nepal, in 1976, from exile in India?

A: Exactly, you were present at the press conference (which was held on 9 November 1990 when the new Constitution was proclaimed) where I called it (the new Constitution) a grand reconciliation. The triumph of the movement, the formation of the coalition government, the drafting of the Constitution and its promulgation have been possible only because of this concept of national reconciliation which has completely succeeded. And I am sure that the line of national reconciliation will continue and our endeavours shall be to make it as effective as possible.

Q: Would it be incorrect to say that the institution of monarchy provides a national focus and that the king has an important role to play in nation-building and modernisation of Nepal?

A: Yes, you are perfectly right and I am one of those who actually has belief in it. I have a faith and when you talk of belief and faith all arguments end. I believe, number one, the king is a focal point. That is why when some army people, army generals led by the commander-in-chief, came to me and said that, "Sir, you must vest the king instead of the people, as you have done, with sovereignty in the new constitution," I said, in our concept the king is much more than a sovereign. We have categorically said in the Constitution that he is the symbol of unity of the entire Nepalese people.

Therefore, it is something that is a great achievement for the King himself. He is a focal point, he will remain so and he will inspire. It is a very innocent word that looks less important than other words. But then he has said that his main job is to encourage the people. How can you encourage others if you are dissatisfied yourself, how can you encourage others if you don't command the respect of the people, if you are not a focal point of the entire nation. So we have said in the Constitution that

the king is the symbol of unity, his job mainly is to inspire confidence in the people and help them.

PAKISTAN

Official Supports Iraqi Occupation of Kuwait

91AS0448A Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST
in English 2 Jan 91 p 2

[Text] Haji Ghulam Ahmad Bilour, MNA [Member of National Assembly] from Peshawar and Awami National Party's [ANP] senior vice-president, has supported Iraqi government's stand on Gulf issue and said *Mard-i-Aahan* Saddam Husayn invaded Kuwait for finding out an amicable solution to long-awaited Palestine issue.

In a press release issued in Peshawar on Tuesday, the ANP leader said Iraq by invading Kuwait had unveiled the aims of the United States, European countries and the so-called champions of the Muslim world and now the world had witnessed that all of them joined hands against Iraqi President Saddam Husayn who at this stage seemed to be the only person in the world sincerely fighting a war for the cause of Muslim countries.

Referring to the United Nations' role in the Gulf crisis, Haji Ghulam Ahmad Bilour said in fact this institution was formed for peace in the world but by adopting resolution against Iraq it had proved itself a stooge of America. He regretted that Israel had been playing with the blood of innocent Palestinians for the last 41 years but the United Nations played role of a silent spectator at the behest of the United States.

The ANP leader alleged that America and its allies were planning to remove Iraq from the world map and urged leaders of Muslim countries to strengthen hands of Iraqi president for foiling attempts of American imperialists. He also called for pressing the United States, European countries and United Nations to find out a permanent solution to the Palestinian problem.

JUP Announces Army of 25,000 To Fight for Iraq

91AS0448B Karachi DAWN in English 14 Jan 91 p 12

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Karachi, 13 Jan—Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani announced on Sunday that Jamiat Ulema-i-Pakistan [JUP] would raise a 25,000-strong Mujahideen force, comprising ex-servicemen, able-bodied and trained youths, who would take part in a Jihad, on the side of Iraq.

Addressing a Press conference here on his return from Baghdad where he attended a three-day 'World Muslim conference,' he said that, if needed, the Mujahideen force would proceed to the Iraqi front via Iran, and hoped that the Pakistan Government would not raise any objection in this regard.

The JUP chief dubbed Pakistan's foreign policy vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis "un-Islamic and pro-U.S.," and regretted that Pakistan, which took pride in being a fortress of Islam, had failed to bring about conciliation between the two brother Muslim States.

If Pakistan could become a bridge for Sino-American understanding through the Kissinger mission in 1970, why could it not play the same role in bringing about a settlement between Iraq and Kuwait? he asked. It was for the 46 member-States of the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference) or the Arab League to mediate in the dispute, and not for the United States to intervene by deploying a multi-national force in Saudi Arabia, he said.

Maulana Noorani criticised the dispatching of Pakistan troops to Saudi Arabia for the protection of Harmain Sharifain, wondering whether there were no holy places in Iraq as well.

Pakistan had thus become a party to the Iraq-Kuwait dispute, he added.

He said the Saudi authorities, a month ago, had levied "war tax" on those who visited the Kingdom for performing Umra, and added that levying of tax for performing Haj or Umra was un-Islamic.

Maulana Noorani said scholars from 72 countries, except Saudi Arabia and the UAE [United Arab Emirates], had attended the Baghdad conference and unanimously declared that a Jihad would be waged if war erupted in the Gulf.

Alluding to internal situation, the Maulana criticised the IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad] government for remaining undecided over the Shariat Bill, and said, despite solemn assurances that enforcement of Shariat was a top priority, the IJI Government "has relegated it (the bill) to the background."

He recalled that the Shariat Bill had been adopted by the Senate when Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan was its chairman but, he said, the President had dissolved the National Assembly on 6 Aug 1990, when two days later the Shariat Bill was to be introduced in the National Assembly.

Maulana Noorani demanded the resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner after the "admission" of Mr Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi that Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan and other front-ranking political leaders were made to lose the 1990 elections but that he (Jatoi) did not want to intervene in the Election Commission's affairs. In the by-elections, especially in the constituency of Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, the same story of rigging and other malpractices had been repeated, he pointed out.

Commenting on Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali's assertion that law and order situation in the province had improved because the MQM [Muhajir Aqumi Movement] had joined the Government, the Maulana

said: "Jam Sahib should include others also, from the interior of the province, in the Cabinet, and peace would reign in Sindh."

JUP Vice-President Shah Faridul Haq intervened to say: "Let all dacoits be appointed ASIs [assistant subinspectors?], and all would be quiet on the front."

JI-ANP Duel in Frontier Outlined

91AS0300D Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
21 Nov 90 p 4

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] In a post-election scenario which had been foreseen by observers of the political scene, the Jamaat-e-Islami [JI] and the Awami National Party [ANP] have started coming out strongly against each other, particularly in the NWFP [North-West Frontier Province]. Within the last couple of days, first the JI and then the ANP chief, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, have vehemently condemned each other's parties. The resultant vitiation of the political atmosphere, especially in the Frontier, is a matter of concern for all those who had thought a broad-based alliance among a section of the political parties in Pakistan would usher in an era of meaningful cooperation leading to the progress and prosperity of the country. Mian Nawaz Sharif is on record as desiring that Mr. Wali Khan should be elected to the National Assembly as his presence in the House would be most helpful. This is the sort of approach required to be adopted by our political leaders at a time when Pakistan is going through one of the most crucial junctures of its history. Confrontation never did serve any purpose, and it is not likely to serve any in the future. Moreover, the differences among the JI and the ANP only serve to highlight a widely held view that the purpose of the alliance now in power, that of ousting the PPP [Pakistan People's Party], having been achieved, the coalition would die a natural death. The rumblings of conflict between these two parties would appear to be the first serious fissures in the unity facade.

Granted that Mr Wali Khan has a larger than life image in the NWFP, his impact on the national political scene is by no means negligible either. At this stage, when a prolongation of the Afghan conflict and the consequent perpetuation of the puppet Najib regime at Kabul can serve the interests of none but the USA, the ANP leader, with his meaningful equation with the Soviet Union, is in an ideal position to use his good offices for resolving the impasse. He could do this country, and the Pash-toon brethren on both sides of the Durand Line, no greater service than to utilise his talents and standing as a statesman to the cause of bringing peace to the war-torn Afghan nation. The trouble with most of our supposedly 'progressive' politicians, especially of the hard-boiled variety, is that they are at a genuine loss to readjust their sights to the dramatic new realities of the world today. With reference specifically to Afghanistan, it is apparent that the Soviet Union has a compelling but

cautious desire to secure stability for its soft underbelly by coming to terms even with the 'fundamentalist' Mujahideen whom the United States, for its own good reasons, is not willing to touch with a nine-foot pole. It is in that context that Mr Wali Khan is ideally placed to play a historic role of conciliation. Such a realisation on his part would also go a

long way in removing the unnecessary clash of perceptions between himself and his new partners in the IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad]. At any rate, the IJI is under no compulsion in terms of its legislature strength at both the Centre and in NWFP, to carry the ANP along. But a parting of the ways can be avoided.

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